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ABSTRACT

The results of ongoing research on the acquisition of Irish as a first language are presented in this collection of four papers from a 1991 seminar and a fifth paper specially commissioned for this volume. The study of Irish syntax is of particular interest because of its contribution to the ongoing search for a Universal Grammar. The papers and authors are as follows: "The Acquisition of Irish as a First Language: What Do We Know?" (Tina Hickey); "Irish Language Acquisition and Speech/Language Therapy: Principles and Needs" (J. L. Kallen and Martine Smith); "Resilience and Versatility in an Urban Gaeltacht" (Gabrielle Maguire); "Developmental Stages in the Acquisition of Irish Phonology and Initial Mutations" (Donall P. O Baoill); and "Lan Beil" (Diarmuid O Donnchadha), which is in Irish. (Contains 110 references.) (LB)

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INSEALBHÚ NA GAEILGE MAR CHÉAD TEANGA
ACQUISITION OF IRISH AS A FIRST LANGUAGE

EAGARTHÓIR/EDITOR: Dónall P. Ó Baoill

IRAAL

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Réamhrá

Shocraigh IRAAL tamall ó shin go raibh sé in am an taighde a bhí ar siúl ar Insealbhú na Gaeilge mar Chéad Teanga a thabhairt le chéile i bhfoirm leabhráin, ionas go mbeadh fáil ag teangeolaithe agus ag lucht léinn agus múinte na Gaeilge ar an ábhar. Ritheadh seimineár ar an 27ú Aibreán, 1991 faoin ábhar agus tá torthaí an tseimineáir sin á chur ar fáil sa leabhrán seo, i bhfoirm alt. Tugadh ceithre cinn de na hailt mar chainteanna ag an seimineár úd. Scríobhadh an cúigiú páipéar le Jeffrey L.Kallen agus Martine Smith go speisialta don eagrán seo. Baineann an t-ábhar acu siúd le Teiripe Teanga agus Urlabhra do chainteoirí Gaeilge.

Tá suim nach beag ag teangeolaithe i gcoitinne agus ag lucht na teangeolaíochta teoiriciúla ar fud an domhain sa Ghaeilge le fiche bliain anuas mar gheall ach go háirithe ar staidéar na comhréire agus ar an síorthaighde atá ar siúl ag iarraidh a theacht ar Ghramadach Uilíoch. Beidh suim dá réir acu sin go léir faoina dtarlaíonn agus páistí ag iarraidh an teanga a insealbhú mar chéad teanga.

Ba mhaith le hIRAAL a mbuíochas ó chroí a chur in iúl do Roinn na Gaeltachta a thug deontas dúinn le cuidiú linn an leabhrán tábhachtach seo a fhoilsiú. Gabhaimid buíochas freisin le hInstitiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann as clóchur ar ineall barrdheasc a dhéanamh ar an leabhrán dúinn.

An tEagarthóir,
Meán Fómhair, 1992

Introduction

IRAAL decided some time ago that it would be desirable at this point to bring together in book form the results of ongoing research on the Acquisition of Irish as a First Language. This would allow linguists, and students and teachers of Irish, to have access to up to date information on this important topic. A seminar was held on the 27th April, 1991 to discuss some of the research findings and the results are now being published in the present volume. Four of the articles appearing in the book were delivered at the seminar. The fifth article by Jeffrey L. Kallen and Martine Smith on Speech and Language Therapy for learners of Irish as a first language, was commissioned especially for this volume.

Linguists in general, and those engaged in theoretical research world wide in particular, have in the last two decades, taken a particular interest in the study of Irish syntax, because of its contribution to the ongoing search for a Universal Grammar of Language. These people I am certain will have an equal interest in how children acquire Irish as a first language.

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to Roinn na Gaeltachta for providing financial assistance towards the publication of this book and we would also like to thank Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann for helping with the typesetting and providing us with desktop facilities.

The Editor,
September, 1992

The acquisition of Irish as first language: what do we know?

Tina Hickey
Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann

1. Introduction

There is a long and rich tradition of Celtic linguistics which has looked especially at historical issues in Irish. There have also been great efforts expended to help learners of Irish as a second language since the foundation of the state. But much more limited attention has been given to the acquisition of Irish as a first language. This may have been due to the divisions between the disciplines involved in these subjects: educators were absorbed in the task of teaching Irish, Irish linguists with the historical development and description of the adult language, and developmental psychologists, who were in the vanguard of child language research in other countries, were not involved in the subject of Irish. There were a few notable exceptions: Mac Mathúna (1979) looked at phonological development and at various features in the syntactic development of one child. McKenna and Wall (1986) described the semantic relations evident in the speech of two children at the two-word stage of development, showing the similarities with developments in other languages. Ó Donnchadha's (1981) essay underlined the importance of a clear understanding of first language (henceforth L1) acquisition for the teaching of a language as L2. These pieces of research from a linguist, two psychologists and an educator were the first steps in the analysis of Irish acquisition, and we owe a debt to their authors. This paper will discuss more recent developments in research on the acquisition of Irish.

First a note on the subject of child language research in general. Many people have personal experience of observing children learn to talk, but this does not necessarily lead to fully informed theories about the process of acquisition, and its relationship with other aspects of cognitive and social development. An analogy could be drawn with our personal experience of economic phenomena, which does not make us economists. Like any other discipline, child language research has its own methods, its ways of eliciting and collecting data, its experimental procedures, but most importantly it has the questions which motivate its research. It is not engaged in the mere description in isolation of aspects of acquisition. It must go beyond that to engage in theoretically directed research where questions are posed and answered, and those answers reviewed in the light of knowledge already gained.

The study of the acquisition of Irish as first language is important in that it contributes to our knowledge of the language. It is said that the acquisition process lays bare the 'internal logic' of a language, and we ignore this at our cost. The teaching of Irish as a second language, the discussion of changes in the language, and the description of the adult language, can all benefit from information on its acquisition as mother-tongue.

Over and above this, the study of Irish acquisition can make its own unique contribution to theories of acquisition. Crosslinguistic comparisons of acquisition have assumed greater importance in the field in the last decade especially, with the attempt to distinguish between aspects of acquisition which may be universal, and those which are language-specific (see, for example, Slobin 1985). Irish can make a valuable contribution to this body of research, having many features which are of particular interest for crosslinguistic comparison. For example, its VSO word order places it among a minority of the world's languages. The issue of word order in early acquisition is a particularly controversial one, which has already been studied in a wide range of languages. Initial mutations and their effects on early segmentation, the formation of negatives and interrogatives and the complexity of its plurals are among the other features which make Irish an interesting language for general theories of acquisition.

The acquisition of some of these features of Irish will be discussed briefly below, specifically the development of word order, pronouns and negation. Since this article is based on a wider study of the process of Irish acquisition, and the strategies used in first language acquisition, other aspects of that process will also be presented briefly. First, some methods of analysis of acquisition data are discussed, and a summary of aspects of the children's acquisition between 1;4 (1 year and 4 months)) and 3;0 is presented.

2. Subjects

The data are drawn from a longitudinal study of 4 children (in this paper only the three youngest children will be dicusssed) from Corca Dhuibhne in Co. Kerry. These children were acquiring Irish as their first language. They were visited and taped in conversation with a parent, usually their mother, for about two hours every 18 days for 9 months. The children were selected according to their age in a cross-sectional design. This design allowed the extension of the age span as far as possible, but also enabled the comparison of different children at the same age. The youngest, Eibhlís, was taped between the ages of 1;4 and 2;1; Eoin was 1;6 at a pilot session and was taped between 1;10 and 2;6; Cian was 1;10 at a pilot session and was taped between 2;3 and 3;0.

Each taping session aimed to include the child's normal routine, in order to elicit the language which is associated with familiar activities such as dressing and eating. In addition, part of each session was devoted to play with a standard set of toys provided, which included a model farm (with animals, lorries and gates), a baby doll and bath, and assorted books and picture-trays. With this design, the children's data were elicited in such a way as to allow part of each session to be comparable between the different children in terms of general activity and vocabulary, with another part as free conversation in the child's normal routine. This type of observation tries to generate the maximum generalizable data within the limitations of the amount of data transcription and analysis that can be handled. It gives a picture of the developmental progression within each child, and allows comparisons between them. Between sessions, the mothers were requested to fill a short questionnaire on developments in the children's language.

The household language of all of the children was Irish, though inevitably there was also some exposure to English from television and, intermittently, from visitors. The two youngest children had least exposure to English, but the oldest child, Cian, was exposed to English speaking children when he began to attend a naíonra at about 2;7.

3. Measures of Acquisition

3.1 MLUm

Setting out to study the acquisition of Irish was somewhat akin to deciding to build a house, being architect, surveyor and builder, and then discovering that the bricks also had to be made. The most basic concepts in language acquisition research had to be re-thought in the context of studying the acquisition of Irish. In particular, one of the most frequently used measures in acquisition research, Mean Length of Utterance in morphemes (henceforth MLUm), had to be re-evaluated. MLUm was developed by Brown (1973), who found that children who produce utterances of about the same length in morphemes are more alike in language development than children compared on the basis of age. This measure has been severely criticised in recent years. Its purpose can only be to compare children acquiring the same language; it is not appropriate to use MLU in morphemes in comparison between languages. Thus, we cannot assume that a child at MLU 1.5 in Irish is at the same point in development as a child at 1.5 in English or French. Furthermore, MLUm can only be a useful index for comparisons within languages if it can be used reliably, and, in fact, there are difficulties in applying it to Irish. Hickey (1991a) contains a detailed examination of the problems in applying MLU in morphemes to Irish child language. The conclusion reached is that, in studying the acquisition of Irish, measuring children's language in terms of words is as effective as, and more reliable than, measuring in morphemes.

3.2 ILARSP

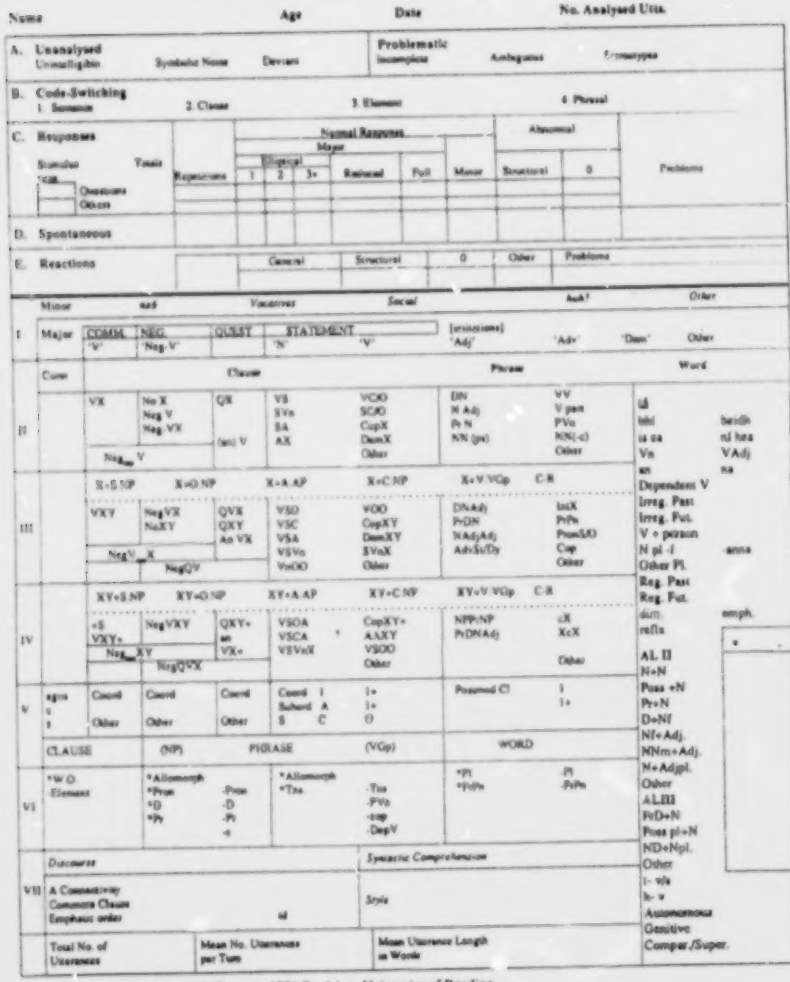
A basic requirement in the study of Irish acquisition was the establishment of certain syntactic milestones. Various methods of doing this were reviewed. What was needed initially for Irish acquisition was a method which could give a picture of a child's language at a particular point, showing structures likely to emerge at about the same time, and relate this development to the ground that still had to be covered. The LARSP profiling method (Language Assessment, Remediation and Screening Procedure) developed by Crystal, Fletcher and Garman (1976, 1981) was considered to be an effective means of presenting a comprehensive but concise picture of a child's language at different stages of acquisition, and it has been found to be a useful instrument for the assessment both of normal and abnormal language development. LARSP has been adapted to several languages, including Hebrew, Dutch, German and Welsh, and Hayden (1984) has also initiated an Irish adaptation. LARSP is organized according to the type of utterance (question, command, statement) and divided into clause, phrase and word level. Stages of development are proposed, indicating structures which emerge at about the same time. A sample of utterances is taken from a child and analyzed according to their function in the context. These utterances are then assigned to LARSP categories and the child's language development is evaluated as being at a particular stage. Gradually, as the child develops, the range of utterance types expands, and covers the different stages. Age norms have been developed for LARSP, but any indication of the age-stage relationship for Irish acquisition must remain tentative until data on a much larger number of children have been gathered.

ILARSP, the Irish adaptation of LARSP (Hickey 1990a; 1991 Revision) is presented in Fig. 1. In line with other researchers who have adapted LARSP, the convention of not translating theoretical labels such as NP was followed. There were major and minor changes necessary in adapting LARSP to Irish, which cannot be detailed here. For a discussion of these adaptations, the reader is referred to Hickey (1990a).

An ILARSP analysis was applied to samples of each child's data from each taping session, following LARSP procedure. These analyses are not described in detail here, but an overall summary of salient features of the children's acquisition is presented.

Fig. 1. ILARSP

The Irish Language Assessment, Remediation and Screening Procedure



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4. Overall course of development

Some of the features of the overall course of early Irish acquisition can be summarised as follows. It must be borne in mind that research on child language has shown significant individual differences between children (Bates *et al.* 1988), and ages given below only show age-stage relationships based on this sample of children. The typical age for the production of the first utterances is around the first birthday. In Stage I of ILARSP, which covers an age range of about 0;9 to 1;6, the children principally use nouns, either in labelling or later in holphrastic utterances. These nouns are in the unmarked singular, except for those, such as *bróga* 'shoes', which are most commonly used in the plural. Onomatopoeic forms are common, such as *mémé* and *bow-wow*. The earli[illegible]t verbs used by the children were the verb 'to be', (predominantly as *tá* initially) and verbs such as *dún, oscail, (ná) dein* and *tabhair*. These imperatives are probably the most salient verb forms in input to young children.

The strongest negative in Stage I is *neó*, though individual children may acquire formulas such as *ní maith* or *ná dein*. Adjectives commonly used at this time are *te* 'hot' or *deas* 'nice'. The demonstrative *seo* is also common, both in the sense of *tá sé anseo* 'he/it is here' and *seo dhuit X* (here to-you X).

By Stage II (between about 1;6 and 2;0), the focus of interest is on ordering relations in early word combinations. In Stage II children also begin to add grammatical elements such as articles, possessives and prepositions. The early marking of tense and aspect occurred in Stage II structures but may not have been productive at this time. The contrastive use of tense forms occurred in *bí* before other verbs, with the appearance of *bhfuil* and the contracted forms *cá 'il* and *níl*, followed by *bhí* and *raibh* and later by *beidh*. Overgeneralization of the forms of *bí* were noted in, for example, the use of *bhfuil* as an affirmative response to *an bhfuil?*. *Tá* was also sometimes used as a general response form, for example in:

Bhfacais é? 'did you see it?'
Tá (be-Pres)

Similarly, *níl* was overextended by the children for a period as a general negative response.

The emergence of forms referring to on-going activity (verbal nouns) marks a significant development during Stage II. Early examples of this type are *(ag) gol, g'ithe, (ag) siúl*. References to continuing activity have been found to appear early in other languages also (Weist 1986a), and are thought to have high salience for young children. Verbal adjectives such as *imithe* 'gone', *briste* 'broken', *déanta* 'done' also appeared about the same time, usually referring to actions which were just completed.

Past tense marking on verbs such as *thit* 'fell' and *thug* 'gave' also occurred, but was rather less frequent. Future marking appeared after the past, in *beidh* (be-Fut), and in verbs such as *gheobhaidh* (give-Fut), *rachaidh* (go-Fut), *déanfaidh* (do-Fut) and *caithfidh* (used in the sense of 'must'). Like the verbal nouns, verbal adjectives tended to occur in subject-initial utterances at first (without the auxiliary verb), though by 3;0 there was more likelihood that the initial verb was also present.

Overall, the development of tense and aspect marking in Irish acquisition supports Weist's (1986a) statement that:

> During the period from about 1;8 ±0;2 to 2;8 ±0;2 every child language investigated expresses ....the composite notions nonpast-continuative versus past-complete and realis [actual] versus irrealis [potential events expressed as intentions or desires]. Weist (1986:366)

Slobin (1981) describes the process of seeking linguistic expression for newly emerging concepts as 'cognitive pacesetting'. Weist (1986a) discussed evidence of such cognitive pacesetting in the development of temporal systems where progress in the coding of temporal relationships is related to the development of concepts such as object permanence, displacement, temporal decentration, seriation and reversibility.

Some forms of the copula appeared early, for example *sea* and *ní hea*; Cian mainly used *sea* correctly, but he sometimes overextended *ní hea* to negate other verbs, for example:

> *Bhfuil an gamhain sin loite?*
> *Ní hea*

The children's identification sentences took the form *sin caoire* or *sin daidí*, and occurred early and frequently, especially in the book-reading context. Other copular constructions which appeared by about 2;6 were *ní maith* and *is liomsa é*.

Prepositional pronouns appeared in these children between about 1;6 and 1;9, but in utterances that are not at first fully productive. They were initially acquired in the first person singular. By age 3;0 many of these prepositional pronouns were productive, being used in a variety of linguistic contexts, but as yet they were restricted mainly to the first and second person singular, with less frequent third person singulars such as *dó*, *aige* or *air*. The most frequent pronouns were the third person masculine pronouns and first person *mise* and *mé*. The synthetic verb + person markers used in this dialect were infrequent in the children's language, perhaps because they are less salient than the pronoun. They appeared to be acquired lexically at first, for example in phrases such as *cá bhís?* or *chím é* and on occasion caused some re-analysis of the

verb. For example, Eibhlís first produced *gclonn tú?* '(do) you see?', and *chlonn mise é 'I see it'* but after acquiring *chím é* (see-I it) she also produced *chí MISE é.* The feminine third person pronoun and prepositional pronouns emerges later than the other singular pronouns.

By 3;0 spatial prepositions appear in phrases such as *ar an mbord.* These prepositions seem to be acquired in the general order observed in other languages (see, for example, Johnston and Slobin 1979 for English, Italian, Serbo-Croat and Turkish) with *ar* and *sa* occurring earliest, and others such as *faoi* and *in aice* emerging somewhat later. The more conceptually complex spatial prepositions such as *os cionn, os comhair* and *taobh thiar* remain to be acquired after age 3;0.

The overall picture which emerges from the ILARSP analyses of the children's acquisition of Irish is that, while there were some individual differences in the rate at which they moved through the ILARSP stages, nevertheless there was a fairly good fit between their development and the age norms derived from a larger sample of children acquiring English profiled on LARSP (Crystal, Fletcher and Garman, 1976). As already described, Stage II constructions were acquired between 1;6 and 2;0. Most of the constructions of Stage III were acquired between about 2;0 and 2;6. At this stage the children's sentence formation was the result of adding a new clause element to their earlier two-element clauses, resulting in utterances such as *tá bainne uaim,* or else it was the result of expanding individual clause elements by adding an earlier phrase, for example, *tabhair dom an leabhar.* The children began to use some Stage IV constructions productively between about 2;6 and 3;0. Examples of utterances from this stage are: *tá ceann eile briste agam, tá Con ag gol ar san* and *ní Dad dul a créimire.* The eldest child began to use Stage V clausal connectives about 3;0, showing the first advances into complex sentences.

Language-specific differences in acquisition can, however, be observed at Word level of ILARSP, which showed incomplete development by 3;0. Children acquiring Irish are acquiring a system that is lexically very rich, insofar as there are many inflections that must be learned lexically rather than as a generalizable morpheme. So it is to be expected that the productive use of noun plurals, for example, will be later in Irish than in English, since there are more ways of forming the plural in Irish. The acquisition of Irish plurals presents some good examples of overgeneralization. For instance, a child who had for a time produced the correct plural *éisc* 'fish (pl.)' later substituted the incorrect *iascanna* as a result of the overgeneralization of his rule for the plural, which was based on forms such as *páirceanna* 'fields'. This 'u-shaped curve' of development, where there is switching from the correct to the incorrect form, before arriving back at the correct form, is a feature of child language. The early correct use is an instance of item-learning, the error shows the beginning of rule-learning, and the final correct form indicates that the child has acquired the appropriate rule for the form.

The acquisition of the initial mutations shows a similar pattern of early item-learning followed by reorganization and rule-learning. The mutations initially appeared in prepositional phrases such as *ar an mbord* or *sa bhád* and *istigh sa chotal.* These mutated forms were sometimes treated as the root: for example, Eibhlís, in trying to lift a chair said *an gcathaoir* and Cian referred to *an mbord.* Lenition marking the past tense occurred in irregular verbs such as *thug*, but in regular verbs it was initially variable, and two children wavered for some time between, for example, *tit* and *thit* when clearly referring to a past event. Lenition of feminine nouns after the article was also a probable result of item-learning. The variety of contexts in which the initial mutations occur and the complexity of their use results in their acquisition being spread over a long time-span, probably well into the school years for fully correct use.

5. Irish Acquisition in a Crosslinguistic Context

The first half of this paper has discussed some measures for analysing Irish acquisition data and outlined features of the overall course of early Irish acquisition. Next, some specific aspects of acquisition are dealt with These are: word order development, order of pronoun emergence and the development of negation in Irish acquisition.

5.1 Word Order

Word order development in acquisition has been studied intensively but it remains an area which is hotly debated. Slobin (1982) examined the arguments concerning 'natural' word order in language acquisition. This persistent argument claims that there is a so-called 'natural order' embedded in our cognitions (see Bruner, 1975, Osgood and Tanz, 1977, and McNeill, 1975, for example). It was claimed that the fact that a majority of the world's languages put the subject before the verb (as in English 'Mary won a prize') shows that this order is founded in the very nature of human thought, and that it is somehow the natural word order for human cognition. However, crosslinguistic research on acquisition has shown that the claims of the 'naturalness argument', and the predictions based upon it, are extremely Anglo-centric. Studies of the acquisition of other languages such as Turkish (Aksu-Koc and Slobin 1985), Dutch (Jordens 1990) and Samoan (Ochs 1985) show that children acquiring languages with orders other than SVO, or with variable ordering, do not appear to be at any disadvantage. As early as 1973, Brown noted that:

> It is evidently not the case ...that human children everywhere find some single order sensible for cognitive reasons having to do with the order in which attention might be captured by an agent, an action and an object. Brown (1973:157)

Researchers working within the framework of Generative Grammar claim that the early word order patterns in children's speech show the absence of the transformations which move the verb from its deep structure position to its surface structure position. Chung and McCloskey (1987) have argued that the VSO order of tensed clauses in Irish is the result of movement of the verb from its deep structure position after the subject. Guilfoyle (1990) predicts, by extension, that in the early stages of the acquisition of Irish, only SVO order will be found, since young children lack the transformations necessary for adult surface VSO word order. McKenna and Wall (1986:93) also posited that children acquiring Irish may initially adduce 'an SVO clause rule, and later a VSO rule for non-progressive cases, suggesting a more circuitous and protracted route to the eventual adult word order'. Thus, it is of interest to examine the development of word order in Irish acquisition for evidence of early SVO ordering giving way to later VSO ordering.

The word order patterns in the data from three children in this study were examined. This study is described in more detail in Hickey (1990b). Statistical tests were carried out on the frequencies of verb-initial and subject-initial utterances in the entire dataset for these three subjects. The results are summarized as follows:

Table 1. Word order patterns

	Verb first	Subject first
Eiḃhlís	Dominant pattern	
Eoin	No dominant pattern	
Cian	No dominant pattern	

In two children, subject-initial utterances were as common as verb-initial ones. However, examination of the data showed that this was *not* due to the production of utterances such as *caipín thit* (cap fell). Instead, the children's word order frequencies show the following distribution:

Table 2. The children's verb positions (%)

	Main Verbs		Verbal Nouns		Verbal Adjectives	
	VS	*SV	*VnS	SVn	*VAdjS	SVAdj
Eibhlís	99	1	0	100	0	100
Eoin	86	14	3	97	4	96
Cian	89	11	4	96	8	92

* indicates the incorrect order

When the two younger children began to combine words, the verb-initial order was dominant. However, when verbal nouns and verbal adjectives became more frequent in their data, they produced more subject-initial utterances by dropping the auxiliary verb *bí*. Of the three children, Eibhlís had the most consistently correct word order patterns. This appeared to be due to the fact that, as the youngest child, she used fewest verbal nouns and verbal adjectives. Eoin and Cian also started out with the correct pattern, with utterances such as *tá bainne* (i.e. *tá bainne uaim* (be-Pres milk from-me) when requesting milk) and *thit sé* (fell he) but then they acquired verbal nouns and verbal adjectives. The significance of these elements, of course, is that their normal position is after the sentence subject, as in *tá Bran ag ithe* (be-Pres Bran eat-Vn). The children learned this new order, but it seemed to impose a processing burden on them, so that the cost of adding new elements at the end of the utterance was borne by a reduction at the beginning. Specifically, the children omitted the auxiliary verb *bí* in these sentences, resulting in utterances such as *Con ag gol* 'Con crying' and *daidí imithe amach* 'daddy gone out'. Of course adults also do this to some extent in Irish, but as Table 3 shows, the rate of *tá* omission in the children was significantly higher than in their mothers' input to them.

Table 3. % Omission of *tá* in obligatory contexts

	Age	Child's Omission	Omission in Mother's Input
Eibhlís	1;4 - 1;8	21	11
	1;9 - 2;1	62	11
Eoin	1;10 - 2;1	28	11
	2;2 - 2;6	72	11
Cian	2;3 - 3;0	60	11

Only Cian showed the re-introduction of *tá* both as auxiliary and as main verb as he approached 3 years of age.

Thus, even though the children frequently produced subject-initial utterances, this does not support the theory that that is the most natural order for human languages. The prediction of the Structure Building Hypothesis (Guilfoyle, 1990) that they would only produce subject-initial utterances at first (because verb-movement is not possible in the early stages due to the absence of functional categories such as COMP and INFL) is not borne out. Instead, the children placed their early (main) verbs correctly before the subject and their later verbal nouns and verbal adjectives correctly after it. There were a number of instances of incorrect SV placement in the two older children, but these only occurred for a short time *after* they had been producing correct verb initial utterances and when they had begun to use SVn utterances frequently.

The children's general strategy of omitting *tá* far more frequently than was the case in the input to them accords with other research on children's acquisition, which shows a strong tendency to drop the elements that are redundant or given in the context. Their utterances without *tá* were perfectly comprehensible, so their strategy was a fairly economical one: acquire an element, but shelve it when it is given information and when you need all your processing power to attend to new elements.

Other data on the acquisition of Irish show similar results concerning the omission of the substantive verb. Mac Mathúna (1979:85) noted a 'randomness' in the inclusion or omission of *tá* in his subject Máirtín at 2;9. McKenna and Wall (1986) also found that *tá* omission was frequent in their subjects. However, they report concurrent use of VS patterns with finite verbs in these children. Clearly, a longitudinal perspective is necessary for the study of word order development in Irish, so that the order of the early combinations can be examined and the distributional differences between the elements in verb-initial and verb-final utterances can be studied. There is no support in the data of the present study for an initial SVO pattern with finite verbs. Instead, it appears that the children acquire VSO order first, which later is differentiated from [V]SVn.

6. Order of Pronoun Emergence

The order in which pronouns emerge in child language has attracted considerable attention. Pronouns are of particular interest because they designate speech roles and because their reference shifts as different speakers use them. The main roles encoded by pronouns are those of speaker (I), addressee (you) and non-participants (he, she, it, they). Carey (1982) claimed that the compositional view of semantic developmentwhich held that the order of acquisition of words within a particular domain would be determined by the complexity of their semantic components, was supported by the data on the emergence of pronouns. Semantic analyses predict a universal acquisition order as follows: first person singular, followed by second

person singular, followed by third person singular, with plural pronouns emerging later. Chiat (1986) noted that this has been linked to the child's egocentric world view, and a natural conceptual progression from the self outwards. Budwig (1985) examined the range of self-reference forms used by young children at a time when they rarely refer to others and claimed that this represents their attempt to distinguish linguistically between their role as prototypical agent and deviations from that prototype.

However, in some languages, pronominal reference to particular persons may be relatively more difficult than it is others. So, researchers have looked at the order in which children acquire pronouns in different languages in order to assess the relative contribution of morphological, syntactic and semantic complexity.

6.1 Pronoun emergence in crosslinguistic research

Pronoun acquisition has been most widely studied in English, (for example, by Chiat 1986, Charney, 1980 and Huxley 1970), where the order found fits with the semantic analyses of pronouns. There are some problems of comparability between English studies, but the general pattern is for 'I' to precede 'you' and 'it', followed by 'he', with 'she' emerging last of the singular pronouns. (Bybee (1979) has discussed the crosslinguistic tendency to favour the less marked masculine forms.) The usual age for the acquisition of first and second person pronouns in English, French and German is about age 2;6. Kaluli children acquire these pronouns much earlier, never using their own names to refer to themselves (Schieffelin, 1985). Japanese children acquire pronouns later (Clancy 1985), partly because of the use of their names in input, rather than the pronouns marked for kinship, and partly because of the diversity of pronoun forms. German children were found to master pronouns referring to the speaker or addressee first (Mills 1985; Deutsch and Pechmann 1978), before aquiring expressions for indicating relations between the speaker or addressee and a third person. Clark (1985) noted that in French acquisition, singular pronouns appear before plural ones, and first and second person pronouns appear before the third person.

However, Berman (1985) found a somewhat different order of emergence in Hebrew acquisition, since Israeli children initially use third person inanimate pronouns, followed by first and third person animate pronouns; second person and plural pronouns emerge later in Hebrew. There has also been evidence of the emergence of the third person singular forms before the first in Italian (Frontali 1943-44 cited by Clark 1985), where person is marked directly on the verb and where the imperative is acquired first, then the third person indicative, followed by the first person form.

6.2 Order of Pronoun Emergence : Irish Acquisition

Thus it is of interest to investigate the order found in Irish acquisition. The child acquiring Gaeilge na Mumhan hears a range of pronoun forms, including synthetic V+person markers for first and second person (which differ according to tense), analytic third person pronouns, and analytic contrast forms such as *mise*. In addition, there are the prepositional pronouns. So first person reference may be in the following forms, for example: *thiteas, táim, táimse, mise, mé, liom, orm, agam,* etc. Only *mise* and pronouns with the emphatic suffix are stressed; the unstressed synthetic verb forms in particular are often not of high salience. The second person is represented by a similar range. Third person reference is less varied, since i) there are no synthetic forms, ii) the emphatic third person pronouns in this dialect are the transparent *sé sin* and *sí sin,* and iii) there is no inanimate pronoun corresponding to 'it'.

These differences in formal complexity were found to have some effect on the children's order of pronoun emergence, which can be summarized as follows:

Eibhlís between 1;4 and 1;7 used first person prepositional pronouns, *sé* and *é*, the latter usually as object, though occasionally as subject of verbs other than the copula also (e.g. *thit amach é* (fell out it-obj). Between 1;8 and 1;11, in addition to her first person prepositional pronouns, *n'fheadar* (neg'know-I) was used frequently, though probably non-productively. At the same time she used her own name in about 25% of her references to herself. The possessive *mo* 'my' also appeared and was sometimes used instead of *mise*. The third person pronoun *é* remained her most frequent pronoun. By 2;1 Eibhlís referred to herself mainly with prepositional pronouns such as *uaim* and *dom,* and with the emphatic pronoun *mise*. The third person masculine pronouns were used productively, and there were also infrequent uses of the feminine *í,* mainly referring to a baby doll. Only at 2;0 was there productive use of *tusa* 'you' (sometimes meaning *do* 'your') and infrequent use of the second person prepositional pronouns *duit* and *agat*. The third person singular pronoun *sé* was at this time overextended to the plural *siad*. Instead of the emphatic particle on prepositional pronouns, Eibhlís at this time produced *agam mise*. Such overmarking was noted in all three children and is discussed by Mills (1985) and Berman (1985) regarding German and Hebrew data.

Eoin at 1;10 used *mise, sé* and *é*, but at 2;0 he began to refer to his own actions or those of his sister with synthetic verb + second person markers and prepositional pronouns. Pronouns clearly present difficulties for children: they must learn that 'you' and 'I' swop about. Some children may, like Eoin, have a period of pronoun reversal: after hearing themselves referred to by others as *tusa* they may also refer to themselves as *tusa*. Eoin would say *hata ort* (hat on-you) when he wanted someone to put his own hat on for him or *bainne agat* to describe what he himself was drinking. Pronoun

reversal has been found in the acquisition of other languages also. While this reversal continued until 2;7, he also used his own name to refer to himself. Only at 2;7 did he begin to use *mise* (I - emphatic) again.

Between 2;3 and 2;5 Cian used first person prepositional pronouns and *mo* to refer to himself and *é* and *sé* to refer to third parties. Between 2;6 and 2;10, while he continued to use these first person forms, he also used his name or *Baba* to refer to himself. First person pronouns became his dominant means of self-reference again after 2;10. At 2;11 he began to use second person prepositional pronouns and *tusa*.

The order of pronoun emergence (with prepositional pronouns included) in the two children who did not show consistent pronoun reversal can be summarized as follows:

1st and 3rd person masculine - 2nd.

Thus, the crosslinguistic finding that the first person pronouns emerge early is supported by the Irish data. However, the late emergence of the second person pronouns compared to the third person masculine pronouns shows more similarity to Hebrew acquisition than to the crosslinguistic evidence showing reference to the addressee as the next to emerge in several other languages.

The children's continuing use of their names in self-reference indicates that the acquisition of the first person pronouns was not yet functionally complete. This use of the name even when first-person pronouns have been acquired is not uncommon in studies of other languages. Budwig (1985) has examined this phenomenon and she argues that children use their name and pronouns with different functions: the name for self-identification (e.g. in a photograph or mirror) or description, but the first person pronouns in volitional utterances and possessives. However, no such distinction was noted in the Irish children's use of name vs pronoun.

The order of pronoun emergence in the Irish data is probably the result of the interaction between formal difficulty and meaning difficulty. First person pronouns and prepositional pronouns emerge early in the children's language because of their conceptual primacy, which compensates for their relative formal complexity in Irish and their different sentence positions. It seems that the need of young children to refer to themselves - the most important persons in their linguistic universe - compensated for the difficulty in terms of the diversity of forms. Thus, because there is so much talk about themselves and because self-reference is so important a part of early child language, they do acquire the first person pronouns and prepositional pronouns, possibly as formulaic utterances initially.

However, the need to refer to the addressee is less urgent and does not compensate to the same extent for the complexity of the second person pronouns, which emerge

late in the children's data. Instead, the third person pronouns *sé* and *é* emerge earlier, probably because they are less variable in form than the second, and have a wide range of uses, particularly when the gender distinction is ignored (as it was by the children). The predominance of *é* in the children's early data is probably due to its high perceptual salience as an item which frequently occurs sentence-finally (as in *tabhair dom é* 'give me it'). Thus, there is an interplay between the functional priority attached to a form and its formal difficulty, which, together with sentence position and stress, influence its order of emergence within specific language sub-systems.

7. Acquisition of Negation in Irish

The development of negation has also attracted interest in crosslinguistic research, with studies, for example, on negation in Dutch (Jordens, 1991), German (Clahsen, 1983, Wode 1977), Japanese (Ito, 1981), Korean (Choi, 1988) and Tamil (Vaidyanathan, 1991). These studies build on the seminal research on English negation acquisition by Bloom (1970). Some of this research can be summarised by Wode's (1977) outline of acquisition in English, German and Swedish:

Table 4. Stages of development of negation in English, German and Swedish (Wode, 1977)

I	One Word Neg:	No
II	External Neg: No/not + simple proposition	
	a) Anaphoric negation	No, me
	b) Non-anaphoric	No soup
III	Internal Neg: no, not, possibly *position	Kathryn no like celery
IV	Internal Neg: not, correct position	I'm not sad now

The development of negation in Irish (discussed more fully in Hickey, 1991b) is of interest because of the particular features of this system in the language. The questions which arise are: what happens in a language which has an echoic negative, whereby the verb is repeated after a negative clitic, so that unlike the other languages in which this has been studied, Irish simple sentences do not have sentence-internal negation? Do children acquiring Irish favour a particular negative which is overextended to function as a general negative response?

We know that the Irish echoic response has seeped into Hiberno-English giving examples such as: 'can you come? I can'. However, Ó Siadhail (1973) has noted the use of the English negative response 'no' (with a slender 'n', *néo*) in Irish. Ó Siadhail

argues that Irish has moved to a mixed system in which *neó* is sometimes used to strengthen an Irish negative, as in his example:

> *An bhfuileann tú ag déanamh praiseach?* 'Are you making a mess?'
> *Neó, níl* (no, neg-be-Pres) 'No, I'm not'.

In fact, in my study of adults' use of this form in input to the children, I found that this *neó* was more often an anaphoric negation of the previous utterance, and then followed by a positive statement, as in:

> E: *Daidi imithe?* 'daddy gone?'
> M: *Neó, tá daidi thiar sa chistin* 'No, D is beyond in the kitchen'

There are no figures available as yet for the use of *neó* in adult-adult conversation in Irish, but my input data indicate that mothers use *neó* quite often to young children, and it is expected that this will be reflected in the children's use of the form.

Eibhlís's predominant negative was *neó* used alone, which accounted for 80% of her total negatives. Here is the progression in her negatives over the period of study.

Table 5. Eibhlís's Negatives

1;4-1;6	*Neó* (R)	*Ní* (R)	
1;7-1;8	*Neó* (R/D)	*Ní maith* (R)	*Neó+X* (R)
1;9-1;10	*Neó* (R/D)	*N'fheadar* (R)	*Neó+X* (R/D)
1;11-2;1	*Neó* (R/D)	*Níl* (D)	*N'fheadar* (Epist) *Neó X* (R/Inab.)

R = Rejection, D = Denial, Epist = Epistemological Neg, Inab = Inability

Eibhlís's dominant negative at 1;4 was neó, used alone as rejection. She had a few uses of *ní* between 1;4 and 1;8, in the formula *ní maith liom*, but she then went on to combine her *neó* with other words in utterances such as *neó arán*. *N'fheadar* was a useful phrase she acquired about 1;9 and she overextended this as a general refusal, for example in the exchange:

> M. *Conas táin tú Eibhlís?* 'how are you Eibhlís?'
> E. *N'fheadar* 'I dunno' (refusing to take part in their verbal game or routine initiated by this question)

Eibhlís's first apparently productive Irish negative, *níl*, appeared about 1;11, functioning as denial from the outset and usually used correctly. Nevertheless she continued to use *neó X* utterances to express other functions, such as her inability to lift a chair.

Eoin also began with a dominant rejecting *neó*, which he later used in combinations. He developed a very strong pattern of taking a word from someone else's utterances, putting a *neó* in front and using this as a general rejection. So his mother might say: *cé hé sin amuigh?* 'who's that outside?' to which he replied *neó muigh* 'no outside'. Eoin's development of negation is summarised in Table 6.

Table 6. Eoin's Negatives

1;10	*Neó* (R)		
2; 0	*Neó* (R/D)	*Neó X* (R)	*Mithe* (Disap)
2; 5	*Neó* X (R/D)	*Mithe* (Disap/Non-ex)	*Níl* (D/R)

R = Rejection, D = Denial, Disap = Disappearance, Non-ex = Non-existence.

When Eoin began to use *níl* he overextended it to other verbs and to other tenses, apparently using it as an Irish equivalent to *neó* and as a rejection, e.g.:

M. *tabhair dom é* 'give it to me'
E. *níl* (Neg-be-Pres)

Cian's data showed the greatest advance towards adult negatives. Like the other children his first preferred negative was *neó* used alone, but by 2;6 he was using it frequently in *neó X* utterances. This form in turn declined about 2;8, when *níl* became his most frequent negative. Initially *níl* was part of the routine of the 'Bran' book, but later it functioned as a denial which was overextended for verb and tense. Cian's negatives are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7. Cian's Negatives

1;11, 2;3	*Neó* (R)	*Neó X* (D/R)	*No way* (R)	*N'fheadar* (R)
2;4 - 2;7	*Neó* (R/D)	*Neó X* (D)	*No way* (R/D)	
2;8 - 2;9	*Neó* (R/D)	*Neó X* (D/R)	*Níl* (D)	
2;10-2;11	*Níl* (D)	*Ní [hea]* (D/R)	*Neó X* (R/D)	*Imithe* (Disapp)

R = Rejection, D = Denial, Disap = Disappearance, Non-ex = Non-existence.

Cian's errors showed that he had not reached the stage of adult usage of the negative particles at 2;11. At 2;8 he used the form *ní-a* (which may have been an approximation to *ní hea*) as follows:

M. *Thug Dad milseán duit?* 'Dad gave you a sweet?'
C. *ní-a*

There were signs that Cian was trying to integrate his various negatives into a general response. At 2;9 he seemed to be connecting *ní* with *neó*, with a drawn-out response *ní-ó*. In the same session there was the following exchange:

M. *An bhfuil cnaipí ag Cian?* 'has C got buttons?'
C. *neó-íl*

Thus he seemed to be trying to integrate *neó*, *ní*, *ní hea* and *níl*, resulting in the blends: *ní-o*, *neó-íl* and *ní-a*. This attempt to link the English free form with the Irish clitics is an understandable diversion in the acquisition of Irish negation, but it is still a cul-de-sac. Cian's difficulty in finding the correct negative was still evident at 2;11 in the following example:

M. *Agus an bhfuil Treasa i gCorcaigh? 'And is T in Cork?*
C. *Ní, né, neó tá Treasa i gCorcaigh (Neg? no be T in Cork)*

It also seems that acquiring *neó* first established the expectation that the other forms are also free forms, resulting in the treatment of *ní* and *níl* as a general reponse by Eoin and Cian, rather than as clitics or tense- and verb-specific negatives. For example Cian at 2;11 overextended the clitic *ní* and used it as a free form rather than a bound one as in:

M. *D'ith mise ar fad iad* 'I ate them all'
C. *Ní* (Neg)

Despite these difficulties, the development of negation in Irish can be described in stages comparable to Wode's (1977) progression:

Table 8. Development of negation in Irish

I	Free form [nein, no, na, nej]	Neó
II	Neg+S (nein sauber, no soap) + Formulaic negatives	Neó muigh N'fheadar Ní maith (liom)
III	Morpho-sytactic devices of II abandoned in favour of adult negative elements sometimes overextended	Níl Bran Ní thit sé Ní hea déanamh Níl, Ní
IV	Correct use (Irish: Verb/tense-specific)	Ní thaitníonn sé liom Níl Con ag gol Ní hea

Regarding the functions of these negative utterances, when the one-word negative utterances were included, the first function to emerge was rejection, followed in two children by denial, in the other by non-existence/ disappearance.

The mothers' input to each child was analyzed over four hours of tape in each case. *Neó* made up between 9%-30% of negatives in the mothers' input, but between 72-80% of the children's negatives overall, though this proportion declined as the children developed.

It appears that, given the chance of using an all-purpose invariant negative response form, the children availed of it, and used it at about three times its level of frequency in the mothers' input. This meant that, instead of being at a formal advantage in acquiring a language whose negation is sentence-external, they then had to learn to restrict their use of *neó* and learn the echoic negative still predominant in the language. Thus, after a period during which *neó* + *S* utterances were their dominant productive negatives, the children for a time overextended specific negatives such as *níl* and *ní hea* to other verbs or tenses before learning the appropriate contexts for the different Irish negative forms.

8. Conclusion

This paper has summarized some of the recent work on the acquisition of Irish. In doing so, it has aimed to provide a glimpse of the riches and excitement to be found

in this field. Child language is not just deficient adult language; it is the ever-changing product of the child's interaction with the language. From widely differing theoretical perspectives, child language acquisition has been described as 'the greatest intellectual feat any one of us is ever required to perform' (Bloomfield, 1933:29), or 'the ultimate test' of linguistic theories (Hyams, 1988:159).

The task of the child is to acquire language, a means of communication, but it is also to acquire a specific language, with particular properties and features. Crosslinguistic research on language acquisition seeks to evaluate how much the process owes to possibly universal preferences for ways to structure meaning and express it in linguistic form, and how much to the experience of the semantic and structural properties of the particular language the child hears. Approaches to the study of language acquisition vary enormously. On the one hand, interactionist approaches consider the contribution of nonlinguistic cognitive development and the social context to the process of language acquisition. Proponents of a Universal Grammar, on the other hand, argue that the child is endowed with a set of innate abstract principles and parameters; input to the child causes him or her to 'fix a parameter' after deciding that the specific language heard operates one way rather than another. The study of Irish acquisition can make a valuable contribution to this debate, since children acquiring Irish are presented with a number of features which differ markedly from those examined in the acquisition of other languages.

The analyses reported have shown many of the aspects of Irish acquisition which are shared with the acquisition of other languages. At a very broad level, there is a general pattern of progression from one-word utterances to two-word combinations to multi-word utterances. There are also similarities in what children choose to talk about: regardless of the language they are acquiring, children express their needs and wants, they make affirmative and negative statements, they ask questions. At a more detailed level, the development of Irish tense and aspect and prepositions, for example, show many similarities with development in other languages.

However, the acquisition of Irish also shows several developmental patterns which are noteworthy in the context of general theories of acquisition. For example, children acquiring Irish produce utterances with a word order which obeys the word order rules of Irish, rather than starting out with a so-called 'natural' order. There is evidence to suggest that semantic and structural complexity interact to influence the order of emergence of different pronouns in Irish acquisition. The study of the acquisition of negation in Irish initially shows a similar progression with that noted in other languages, followed by a progression towards the language-specific echoic negative of Irish.

The analysis of Irish acquisition in a crosslinguistic framework can therefore contribute to wider questions concerning language acquisition and cognitive devel-

contribute to wider questions concerning language acquisition and cognitive development; but it also serves to enrich our understanding of our own language. Much remains to be done in the study of Irish acquisition, but the foundations are now laid, and some of the rooms have been built.

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IRISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND SPEECH/ LANGUAGE THERAPY: PRINCIPLES AND NEEDS

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Introduction

Within the field of Applied Linguistics, Clinical Linguistics can hardly be said to occupy a dominant role. This somewhat marginal status arises for historical reasons, stemming partly from the development of Applied Linguistics in more strictly language-related fields such as language planning, translation, terminology and lexicography, language teaching, and language for specific purposes. If we take **Clinical Speech and Language Studies** to be the academic field which encompasses insights from many different disciplines to provide a basis for the practice of Speech/ Language Therapy (S/LT), we can understand a diversion of interests between **Clinical Linguistics** (Crystal 1987) as a branch of Clinical Speech and Language Studies and the mainstream of **Applied Linguistics** which arises from the broader psychological and medical concerns of the S/L therapist.

Nevertheless, Clinical Speech and Language Studies cuts across the major concerns of Applied Linguistics, relating back equally to sources in fields such as linguistic theory. The S/L therapist and the second language teacher, for example, are often concerned with similar problems: learner variables in relation to levels of success in language learning, testing and assessment, language corpus development, design of materials, the discourse of teaching and learning, and so on. The S/L therapist is also frequently involved in determining goals for language learning. Where 'perfect native speaker command' of the language is not possible, the therapist is critically involved in establishing priorities which enable the client to function pragmatically in the absence of this native command. Such issues too are familiar to the second language teacher.

Outside the clinic itself, other domains illustrate the relationship between Clinical Linguistics and the mainstream of Applied Linguistics. The S/L therapist works in a world in which language planning and policy provide parameters for therapeutic intervention. The choice in the United States as to how to relate therapy to the needs of speakers of Black English Vernacular is a subject of ongoing debate (Seymour and Seymour 1977, Wolfram 1979; see also Chambers 1983), while in many countries the programmes and aims of therapy will operate within guidelines established by

national policies on bilingualism, minority language rights, language and the education system, etc. (cf. Fasold 1984: 292-315). While educationalists have long been familiar with problems arising from the relationships between bilingualism, sociolinguistic variation, and levels of attainment (see especially Skutnabb-Kangas 1981, Edwards 1983, and Cummins 1984a), these issues are of no less concern to the work of S/L therapists (note Milroy 1987: 208-11). Lexicography comes into Clinical Speech and Language Studies when considering the need for explicit and useful terminology. Terms for the profession itself, no less than for a wide range of diagnoses, disorders, and intervention approaches, have changed considerably over time, while major international and sub-regional variations in the choice of lexical items still exist (see Byers Brown 1981: 79-101 for an overview and, e.g., Wiseman 1990 and Smith 1990 concerning the name of the profession in the U.K.) The establishment of cross-linguistic equivalences presents an extremely difficult and undeveloped area. Looked at in this way, Clinical Linguistics provides a bridge between the concerns of the S/L therapist and the world of Applied Linguistics.

Clinical Linguistics thus bears an obvious relationship to the field of Irish language acquisition. We may group common concerns into four major areas. Though presented sequentially below, each area may of course involve simultaneous interaction with others:

Sociolinguistics

1 S/LT considered in the light of Irish language policy and attitudes to language.
2 Sociolinguistics of variation, including variation within Irish and the effects of bilingualism (e.g., code-switching, language transfer).

Assessment Methodologies

1 Normal development of linguistic performance: the establishment of development profiles and age norms.
2 Crucial rules in the development of linguistic competence (taken as a system of abstract rules): the establishment of age-related patterns of acquisition.

Corpus Planning

1 Selection of language goals and targets, depending on speaker variables (e.g., age, ability, hearing, neuromuscular development), the long term goals of therapy, and environmental factors.
2 Choice of targets depending on variation (bilingualism, regional dialect, standardisation).

1 Education for therapists (initial and in-service), covering Irish language acquisition, sociolinguistics of bilingualism and variation, Irish language for S/LT.
2 Development of terminology.
3 Development of formal materials for S/LT through Irish

In the discussion which follows, we consider each of these areas insofar as they relate to the development of S/LT which makes adequate provision for the use of Irish.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC ISSUES

A sociolinguistic perspective on S/LT and Irish logically starts by looking at Irish language policy. There appears to be no centralised policy with regard to language and S/LT services, although we are aware that the Western Health Board, at least, has developed a plan which gives special consideration to the need for provision of service through Irish. Policies developed in education and the public service give clear indications of the legal orientation towards the support of Irish (Athbheochan na Gaeilge 1965, O'Murchú 1985: 34-36, Tovey 1988). Irish educational policy has defused the potentially controversial demands for education in a 'minority' language (Irish), since provision is made for all-Irish medium schools with state support, and additional schooling patterns exist in which subjects other than Irish may be taught through Irish in schools that are not classed as 'all Irish' schools (Mac Mathúna 1985). Thus while a parent whose children speak, for example, Viet Namese as a native language may claim that inadequate provision is made for mother-tongue education in Ireland, claims from Irish-speaking parents are more readily dealt with by Irish-medium schooling in Gaeltachtaí and elsewhere. In comparative terms (see Kloss 1977), Irish language policy is one of 'promotion' for Irish rather than mere 'tolerance', despite disputes which may arise as to the adequacy of the level of support at any given time.

By extension of the principles developed in education, and looking at parallel use of Irish in many State functions, it is arguable that S/LT through Irish should be available as a language right, subject only to the availability of materials and trained personnel. While educational policy concedes that Irish-medium teaching may not be possible in all areas due to a lack of appropriate staffing and resources to meet small demand, S/LT might similarly claim that it would not be practicable to offer an Irish-language service in all areas. The question of 'trained personnel' is complicated by the lack of any specific educational programme for speech therapists to work through the medium of Irish. References to the small size of the demand and the lack of specific training would do little, however, to address the problems of Irish

speakers in the Gaeltacht or in larger urban centers where population numbers could provide a critical mass of Irish speakers whose needs would be better served by intervention which is at least bilingual. It would thus appear that the development of S/LT which caters for Irish is the only position consistent with Irish language policy generally, and that steps would need to be taken to enhance the development of this service.

Language policy establishes official goals and aspirations; it may have some coercive or incentive value to guide and change behaviour. Language attitudes, on the other hand, while sometimes influenced by policy, grow up as the outcome of many conflicting forces and are more difficult to measure. Yet attitudes are crucial in determining not only the need for services, but the success of language teaching programmes and the different effects that a programme may have on different groups in society. It is well established, for example, that children coming from lower prestige language backgrounds who enter immersion schooling in the socially dominant language may suffer adversely: in specific circumstances, this affective factor may argue strongly against immersion schooling for a child with language disability. Conversely, children from dominant language backgrounds who enter second language immersion programmes generally show neutral effects, and there is some possibility for an enhancement of certain skills. Here we may note Verhoeven's (1991) distinction between the 'submersion' experience in the former case, and 'immersion' in a positive sense in the latter; for further discussion see particularly Ben-Zeev 1977, 1984, Miller 1984b, Cummins 1984b, and Bamford and Mizokawa 1991.

The issues of language status and prestige are not as clearly defined in Ireland as they may be in other well-known cases. Whereas 'stigma', low prestige, and low socioeconomic status were attached to Irish in the mid 19th century, years of political and social development combined with language planning and the educational efforts of the State since 1922 have halted this negative evaluation (see O'Cuív 1951, Wall 1969, and Tovey, Hannan and Abramson 1989). Successive attitudinal surveys have demonstrated that affective values associated with Irish are generally positive (Mac Gréil 1977: 126, 403-408, O'Riagáin 1988, O'Coileáin n.d.) Nevertheless, Irish is a minority language in terms of both vernacular and formal usage: with the number of speakers claiming native speaker proficiency estimated at only 3% (O'Coleáin n.d.: 21), this minority is very small indeed (see also Hindley 1990). We are therefore faced with a contradiction if we try to apply the insights of studies of attitudes and bilingualism done in other countries: rarely is a minority language accorded so much official standing, and rarely does it find largely neutral or positive attitudes from speakers of the numerically dominant language.

This contradiction suggests two possible outcomes for the Irish-speaking child with language disability. If we see Irish as a minority language, it is reasonable to

hypothesise that the Irish speaker who receives all therapy through English may be at a disadvantage: providing therapy only through the dominant language may bring about the 'submersion' effects reported elsewhere, and may cut the child off from the network of primary social contacts. Positive attitudes attaching to Irish, however, may partially offset this possibility. The Irish speaker receiving therapy through English may recognise the utility of knowing the dominant language without risking the submersion effects that may face, for example, immigrant speakers learning a national language such as Dutch in the Netherlands (Appel 1988). There may thus be times when therapy through Irish will be advantageous, and others when switching to the 'dominant' language may appear most beneficial. The ultimate decision concerning the medium for therapy may rest on local factors, individual preference, and the abilities of the individual (therapist and/or client): more research is needed, however, to ascertain the comparative benefits of therapy in one language versus the other for different speakers in different communities.

Attitudes towards language concern not only the prestige attached to particular varieties. They may also shape the concept of what constitutes the language itself. "Corpus planning' (Eastman 1983: 70ff) refers to that side of language planning which is concerned with the development of the substance of a language: lexical choice, selection of phonological variants, and other aspects of the process of standardisation and codification. The need to select targets for use in therapy means that the S/L therapist is compelled to engage in a kind of corpus planning. The choice of variants within Irish is familiar from debates in education: should a regional form be used, or should the teacher aim for a non-regional 'standard', 'central dialect' (O'Baoill n.d.), or 'common core'? (O'Murchú 1969). Such decisions are usually made on practical grounds, depending on the language of policy. These issues must be examined in S/LT.

More crucial, perhaps, than the question of variation within Irish is the role of code-switching in S/LT. Since the therapist's main goal will be the enhancement of communication rather than the teaching of Irish or English per se, it would be implausible to suggest that the S/L therapist would discourage code-switching on general principle. The therapist must therefore expect and be able to evaluate language forms which, while not necessarily indicative of any speech/language disorder, reflect a relaxation of the inhibitions against code-switching that might be expected in the formal school environment. Nevertheless, there is also good evidence to suggest that children acquiring two languages resort to a number of simplification strategies by which they facilitate the bilingual language-learning process. These strategies include the 'one person, one language' principle which associates language choice with the language of the interlocutor, separation of languages by topic and semantic field, association of languages with particular speech domains (e.g., home versus school), and others (see Romaine 1989: 165-215 for an overview).

The role of the S/L therapist faced with the competing dynamics of language mixing and separation is quite complicated. In terms of the most salient variables governing language choice (see Fasold 1984 and Milroy 1987), we may characterise the S/LT session as being public, formal and instrumental rather than relying on private relationships (family, close friends), informal setting, or unplanned, open-ended discourse. Yet most therapeutic encounters will attempt to neutralise the formal status of the event in the interests of good communicative relationships and 'rapport'. Hence topics may concern family events and items of personal interest to the client, the physical setting may attempt to minimise the difference between child and adult, and a substantial amount of time may be spent playing language games.

If the child thus adopts the 'one person, one language' strategy with the therapist and views the session as an Irish-speaking event, the language used must be sensitive to the competing demands of formality and domain in order to be successful. A child who associates Irish only with school, for example, may be quite happy with the use of Irish in S/LT to the extent that the session appears as a formal event. The therapist's switch to a more vernacular style and content, however, may place an extra burden on the child with a language disability by requiring an unfamiliar set of lexical, pragmatic, and other linguistic features. Other combinations of speaker ability and values across the continuum for vernacular to formal language within different domains will pose other problems. Though we return to this problem later in discussing 'Corpus Planning', we would stress here that the therapist's need to strive for a balance between the demands of the therapeutic session and the more general constraints on code-switching are intimately associated with language attitudes.

Assessment Methodologies

The goals of assessment in S/LT are comparable to, but in many ways different from, those of language teaching assessment. The S/LT client usually has some observed difficulty with speech production and/or the language system; the difficulty may co-occur with other disorders such as hearing loss, mental handicap, neurological damage, orofacial abnormality, etc. (see Byers Brown and Edwards 1989). Assessment serves many functions: establishing the nature of the presenting problem, i.e., differential diagnosis; identifying associated and potentially causal factors; determining and describing base-line performance across a range of linguistic skill areas (semantics, syntax, phonology, pragmatics) so that goals of intervention may be identified; and monitoring progress to determine the effectiveness of intervention efforts and suggest prognosis. The techniques used must be able to cover a wide range of disorders, including those of fluency, voice, and pragmatics in addition to 'core' language areas such as syntax and phonology (see Bernstein and Tiegerman 1989). With disorders such as profound hearing loss or cerebral palsy, other codes

may be indicated for the child. These may include manual signing, visual picture - or symbol - charts, or devices incorporating synthetic voice output. Such codes are termed augementative communication modes, and with some clients, the assessment process may shift towards these modes rather than concentrating on oral speech (Blackstone 1986).

An important though controversial concept in differential diagnosis of childhood language difficulties is a distinction between development which is **delayed** (where the child has a relatively normal pattern of development that lags chronologically behind the peer group), and **deviant** development, in which an abnormal pattern is presented. Not all children fall clearly into one category or the other, but the initial distinction is widely regarded as therapeutically useful, both in determining appropriate intervention goals and strategies, and in estimating prognosis (Bishop and Rosenbloom 1987). The distinction between **deviance** and **delay** is based on a comparison between the profile of individual performance and information regarding normal patterns of development (see Weiss, Gordon, and Lillywhite 1987, Bernstein and Tiegerman 1989, and Grundy 1989).

Assessment in S/L therapy through Irish, then, begins with an understanding of normal development. Phonological assessment refers to **phonetic production**, i.e., the ability to make the speech sounds of the language, and to the **phonological system**, i.e., the ability to signal phonemic contrasts appropriately and to use the rules of morphophonemic alternation appropriate to the language. Mapping between the phonetic and the phonological level is typically quite complex in the clinic. A child may be able to articulate, say [s] and [t] without difficulty when the sounds are produced in isolation; in words or in connected speech, though, all target fricatives (including /s/) may be realised as [t], while /s/ could even arise as a substitution for some other target sound such as /l/. In this case, no articulatory problem may be in evidence, but there may be doubts concerning the phonemic system which the child is developing. Conversely, the S/L therapist may have evidence from comprehension and other behaviour that a child makes a phonemic contrast in the grammar but, due to physical disability, finds it difficult or impossible to realise this contrast phonetically.

To be useful to the S/L therapist, normal 'base-line' information on the acquisition of Irish must refer to both phonetic and phonological levels. The therapist will approach these levels as separate, though related, problems. Age-graded norms must thus be established for the appearance of particular sound segments in normal Irish-speaking children. Additionally, the development of a system of phonemic contrasts (e.g., the contrast between palatal and non-palatal stops) and the use of morphophonemic rules such as those governing initial mutation and stress placement must be related to chronological stages. Age profiles must moreover be constructed

to account for normal variation which arises in Irish from dialectal differences, dialect mixing, and code switching.

Similar needs exist to differentiate between language production and deeper grammatical knowledge in clinical syntax. The development of ILARSP (Hickey 1990) is a step in the direction of developing age-related norms which basically refer to the production of surface-level functional elements such as Object, Subject, Complement, and Verb, as well as aspects of morphological production. As with any of the LARSP-type assessment protocols (Crystal, Fletcher, and Garman 1976) this system needs to be supplemented by further investigation at higher age levels, particularly where sentences go beyond single clauses or where discourse connectivity is involved.

To illustrate the need for an understanding of the grammatical basis of syntactic production, we turn to two well-known principles in the acquisition of English. The Minimal Distance Principle (MDP), (Chomsky 1969: 10-11), notes that the verb of a matrix clause determines the interpretation of a subordinate subjectless infinitival clause in particular ways. Verbs which follow the MDP ensure that the 'missing' subject will be supplied from the nearest preceding Noun Phrase, as in (1) below:

(1) a *Pat told Kim to go home ('Kim' goes home)*
b *Phil urged the child to open the door ('the child' opens the door)*

Note that these verbs require a Noun in object position which is compatible with subjecthood in the following clause; hence (2) demonstrates ungrammaticality:

(2) *a *Pat told fifty pounds to go home*
*b *[Phil urged directions to open the door*

Other verbs, however, may or may not follow the MDP. Verbs like ask and want can take both interpretations:

(3) a *Pat asked the child to open the door (follows MDP)*
b *Pat asked permission to open the door ('Pat' opens the door, violating the MDP)*

(4) a *Pat wanted Dara to go away (follows MDP)*
b *Pat wanted fifty pounds to go away ('Pat' goes away, violating the MDP; cf (2a) above).*

A verb like promise goes even further, generally violating the MDP:

(5) a *Sandy promised Kim to leave ('Sandy' leaves, violating the MDP)*

b *Sandy promised permission to open the door ('Sandy' does not leave, nor does 'permission'; any interpretation is based on a different structure).*

The minimal distance principle is in many ways indexical of the development of complex syntactic relations in English. Up until around the age of six, children will regularly interpret sentences such as (5a) within the constraints of the MDP, contrary to their interpretation in adult grammar. By the age of eight, most children will have a good understanding of violations and ambiguity connected to the MDP (see Wiig and Semel 1984: 298-300). Where the complexities of the MDP are not learned by the child, as is often the case with language delay, there are obvious implications for the mastery of syntax. Assessment of a child's progress in this area, then, can be crucial to an understanding of the child's development and the course of future therapy.

Analogues to the MDP have not, to our knowledge, been addressed in treatments of Irish language acquisition. Yet there are comparable grammatical structures that may be used diagnostically in assessing a child's state of syntactic development, particularly once age norms are established. In (6) below, then, the subject ***sé*** of the main verb ***lig*** is not the subject of the verbal noun ***imeacht***. Rather, the subject of ***imeacht*** is the pronoun incorporated in ***dó***. Sentence (6) thus follows the MDP insofar as ***dó*** immediately precedes the verbal noun: we note, however, that the parallel between Irish and English is not exact, since the VSX order of Irish means that the unmarked order of Subject and Verb will be fundamentally different from that of English. Hence:

(6) *Lig sé dó imeacht (follows the MDP).*

In (7), however, the MDP is violated just as it is in its English counterpart: though ***dó*** appears adjacent to ***imeacht*** and could, on analogy with (6), be taken as the subject of the verbal noun, it is the more distant NP ***sé*** which serves as the subject of ***imeacht***:

(7) *Gheall sé dó imeacht (violates the MDP).*

A second syntactic principle which is well known in research on English acquisition is one we may term the *'John is easy to please'* construction. Sentences as in (8) share a surface-level similarity, but show profoundly different semantic relations: in the (a) sentence, the subject of the matrix clause is also the subject of the embedded

infinitival clause, while in (b) an 'understood' subject must be supplied, and the subject of the matrix clause is interpreted to be the object of a passive construction in the infinitival clause:

(8) a *John is eager to please*
b *John is easy to please*

As with the MDP, the child's ability to interpret (8) will depend on syntactic development which recognises the structure of (b) as profoundly different from (a). Here again, language delay or deviance could be signalled in the inability to work with sentences of this type, and information of this kind will be quite valuable to the therapist.

Turning to Irish, we see that close grammatical parallels are not easy to find. The sentences of (8) do not readily lend themselves to Irish paraphrases which domonstrate the same structural characteristics. Consider, however, the sentences of (9) below. Like the sentences of (8), those of (9) share surface similarity and would appear to be structurally identical. In (9a), however, the subject ***sé*** is only the subject for ***chuir***; the object included in ***air*** is the subject of the verbal noun ***imeacht***. (This sentence, incidentally, thus follows the MDP). In (9b), however, despite surface similarities, ***air*** does not in fact refer to any object NP, and the verb may be analysed as a complex verb ***lig ... air*** for which there is no noun other than **sé** available to appear as the subject of ***imeacht***. Thus the (a) and (b) sentences show profound differences despite their surface similarities.

(9) a *Chuir sé air imeacht*
b *Lig sé air imeacht*

Mastery of the complexities of sentences such as (6)-(9), then, can be expected to occur in stages, and the S/L therapist will need to have information on the normal sequence of development in order to assess a child's syntactic development.

Assessment protocols, whether for standardised formal assessment, informal checklists, routines for informal interviews or play situations, or other modes of assessment, must be developed to cover a wide range of functions. We have thus far illustrated the need for assessment of critical rules by reference to syntax and phonology, yet many other areas of speech and language must also be assessed. Pragmatic development, for example, involves an ever-increasing ability to engage selectively in a variety of speech acts using different structures and modes of expression across a range of conversational contexts and partners. The appearance of non-literal and indirect speech acts (e.g., *'Close the door before I freeze to death'* or *'Were you born in a barn?'* as directives to close a door) is a part of normal

pragmatic development which may be delayed or absent in the language impaired child. Children learning Irish as a first language in the home would be expected to follow progressions from more direct and concrete to more indirect an non-literal speech acts. The case may be quite different for the child whose primary Irish-speaking environment is the school. The school curriculum rarely gives native-like experience with many types of speech acts which are characteristic of vernacular usage, and the therapist in the bilingual environment may find competing demands between the vocabulary and language style which is part of the child's primary Irish-speaking environment and the demands of vernacular style. The best way out of such a conflict can only be found when more is known about the acquisition of pragmatics in Irish, and this information translated into some form of assessment protocol and associated teaching/therapeutic guidelines.

Thus far we have discussed assessment primarily in a monolingual framework. Within the Irish setting, however, a far more common experience for children is bilingual exposures, where cross-language interference must be distinguished from speech/language disability (see Miller 1984a and particularly Gavillán-Torres 1984; for general models of cross-linguistic relations in S/LT, see also Seymour and Seymour 1977 and Müller, Munro, and Code 1981). Here the insight of more general research on bilingual language acquisition is directly relevant to S/LT. The 'interdependency hypotheses' of Cummins (1984a: 143), for example, proposes a model of bilingual 'common underlying proficiency' in which

> experience with either language can promote development of the proficiency underlying both languages, given adequate motivation and exposure to both either in school or in the wider environment.

Verhoeven (1991) has explored the further possibility that the cognitive and academic skills to which the interdependency hypothsis largely pertains must be distinguished from pragmatic interaction in which language-specific skills may play a greater role. Such notions are no less important in S/LT: the child who is marking plurals in English, but not in Irish, presents a very different problem for the child who has no means of plural-marking in either language. Thus assessment must meet the following conditions: (1) it must focus on the critical analysis of errors so that the therapist can determine whether the source of the error lies in surface-level difficulties in one language or reflects a more fundamental shared linguistic deficit, (2) it must take full account of the client's abilities in both languages, and (3) the acquisition patterns and relevant language structures of each language must be seen in their mutual relationships.

One of the major decisions which may face the S/L therapist is the choice - one language or two? Whilst acknowledging the principle of support for bilingual environments, S/L therapists regularly confront situations where this principle may be challenged by the practicalities of implementing bilingual intervention programmes. One challenge may arise with physically disabled clients, whose speech production abilities are so severely impaired as to make their speech largely unintelligible. A large proportion of such clients can functionally augment their communication by using communication aids which incorporate a voice output based on synthetic speech. The research and development of these aids is costly and is based largely in the United States and in Britain. As a result, the vast majority of commercially available voice output communication aids generate only English. Where assessment results suggest that functional speech is not a viable therapeutic goal for a client, and that in the long-term a communication aid will be required, the practicalities of providing therapy through Irish currently pose serious difficulties, even if the language environment of the client is almost exclusively Irish. If equal access to language and communication opportunities is to be provided to physically disabled clients, a policy of positive promotion of research and the development of communication aids which are capable of generating Irish is essential.

A similar 'Irish or English' choice may face therapists dealing with children whose learning potential is reduced, secondary to mental handicap (note Rondal 1984). The aim of maximising communicative skills means that the client's relative ability in using one or the other language should be the dominant factor in language choice. A learning disabled child from a primarily Irish-speaking home is likely to communicate more effectively through Irish. Furthermore, the use of Irish may be important in social integration with peers and reinforcing social identity, factors which may be of particular concern where other factors (e.g., learning disability) may serve to segregate the child from peers. Intruding on the decision to use Irish, however, may be considerations such as long-term educational and residential placement. Unless placements can be provided which cater for Irish - or bilingual - speakers, the choice will be weighted in favour of an English-speaking, monolingual environment. Thus, policy promoting access to Irish must extend across a range of service delivery locations, and cover services from preschool to adult and geriatric residential placements. This kind of access would allow language-choice decisions to be based on the legitimate communication needs of clients, rather than logistical difficulties of service delivery.

Beyond the issue of language choice, the S/L therapist is confronted by many possible language targets. These targets need to be selected virtually on an individual basis, in that each child presents a unique configuration of physical,

cognitive, and general linguistic capabilities. One crucial factor for all children receiving therapy, however, is the therapist's knowledge of what is considered 'normal' within the appropriate peer group. The therapist working on vocabulary to expect at various age levels, but specifically what types of words are expected. Inferences from English may not be appropriate guides at all: the entire series of prepositions and pronouns used in Irish is quite different from that in English, the two languages do not divide up the colour spectrum in identical ways, the Irish emphatic particle has no analogue in English, and so on. Hence studies will be needed of many aspects of development, not only for the normal child acquiring Irish, but for sub-groups such as those with mental handicap, hearing loss, neuromuscular disability, etc. Though small population sizes in some of these subcategories may make normative data difficult to assemble, even single subject studies which give some idea of the patterns to be expected are essential to the work of the therapist.

The therapist who is choosing language targets must also engage in some planning which takes account of the problems posed by dialect variation and bilingualism. At first glance, it would seem advisable that S/LT in Irish should take place through the local dialect. This decision may be tempered, however, by the schooling environment of the child (where applicable), the therapist's own use of Irish, and other factors. Any thrust towards code-switching will also affect the specific language goals selected by the therapist.

Professional Development

It is one thing to elucidate needs for S/LT through the medium of Irish; it is another to provide the therapist with the means to engage in therapy. The initial professional education of S/L therapists must take account of policy decisions taken to provide an Irish-medium service, and ongoing clinical practice has special requirements for in-service training and the development of terminology and materials which would support this service.

Professional education in S/LT in the Republic of Ireland is available only in the School of Clinical Speech and Language Studies of Trinity College Dublin. Graduates leave TCD with a B.Sc. degree and a professional qualification. This qualification is recognised in the U.K. by the College of Speech and Language Therapists, and reciprocal arrangements exist to varying degrees with professional bodies in other countries. For students entering the course in Trinity, Irish is not required as a Leaving Certificate subject. The overwhelming majority of students, however, present Irish for admission. All of the 19 students for which information is available in the 1991 intake have Leaving Certificate Irish, while 15 out of 16 students in the 1990 graduating class presented Irish on admission. As a means of emphasising the importance of Irish, it might, nevertheless, be advisable to require Irish for admission to the course.

Within the Trinity programme, there is very little evidence of teaching aimed at the development of an Irish-medium service. Requirements in this regard would include:

Irish for specific purposes. Teaching of Irish to students in order to enable them to carry on therapy in Irish, with emphasis not only on vocabulary, syntax, and phonology, but on conversational skills and pragmetics.

Theoretical components. The sociolinguistics of bilingualism in Ireland and elsewhere, the neurolinguistics and psycholinguistics of bilingual language acquisition, and speech pathologies in relation to bilingualism.

Practical components. Assessment through Irish, the development of Irish-based codes such as signing and augmentative communication, and clinical experience in the Gaeltacht.

The qualified therapist will need further support for Irish-medium S/LT services. The whole range of familiar items which the therapist routinely works with (formal tests, workbooks, symbol systems, etc.) must be provided in Irish: materials must be developed where they are lacking. Effective liaison between the Department of Education and the Department of Health must be ensured to enable therapists working in Health Boards and other medical settings to know of and apply research and testing developed within the education system. To complete the cycle, close communication is needed between those whose primary concern is the Irish language, the domains of Health and Education, and the professional programme in Trinity College. Professional terminology to discuss and analyse the whole range of S/L disorders through Irish must also be developed (where necessary) and widely publicised.

Conclusion

The study of the acquisition of Irish as a first language is only now beginning in earnest, despite many years of general interest in the subject among Irish speakers and others interested in cross-linguistic aspects of language acquisition. Given the relative recency of professional fields such as S/LT and clinical linguistics (de Montfort 1970, Grunwell 1988), it should not be surprising that the linkage between Irish is a relatively unexplored territory. Hence it is only appropriate to make suggestions now as to ways in which an Irish medium service could be developed, and as to how further advanced research in this area could benefit both the practitioner and the more general development of knowledge.

Our anecdotal evidence gives some cause for optimism, in that there appears to be a recognition in some areas, at least, of the importance of Irish-language services.

There appears to be a need, however, for a more thoroughgoing language policy which would bring the S/LT sphere more clearly into harmony with policy in education and the public sector.

In order to facilitate the growth of this service, there will be a need to examine areas which lie outside the traditional concerns of Irish language teaching. The importance of bilingualism and code-switching must be accounted for, and the specific needs of subgroups such as the deaf, those with neuromuscular impairment, the mentally handicapped, etc. must also be considered. Formal techniques of assessment, based on studies of 'normal' acquisition within different subgroups of the population, are essential: appropriate language targets must be developed from an understanding of normal progress. Finally, professional development must be extended to include both the incoming student who intends to practice as an S/L therapist and the practising clinician. The clinician, especially, will require not only the 'tools of the trade' in Irish, but the metalinguistic tools found in specifically developed terminology and an Irish-based understanding of language disability in the Irish-speaking environment.

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Resilience and versatility in an urban Gaeltacht

Gabrielle Maguire

The acquisition of Irish as a first language is a very different process today from what it was one or two generations ago. The principal difference hinges upon the fact that it no longer occurs within a monolingual context. There exists a wide spectrum of bilingual shades within which the child may acquire Irish. In many rural Gaeltacht areas, for example, one will find Irish still being spoken by the grandparents. However, if the daughter or son marries a non-Irish speaker the language of the third generation tends to be English, until school-going age is reached. At that stage, Irish may be actively acquired, though not necessarily brought back into the home domain. There are endless variations to that example, both across and within communities.

The bilingual framework to which I am going to refer and within which Irish has been acquired as a first language is also characterised by its own unique set of circumstances. This is to be found in West Belfast.

A newspaper article, published in the Irish Press in 1965, claimed that there were then 36 families residing in Belfast who were raising their children through Irish. These families were not living side by side in the one neighbourhood. Rather, they were scattered throughout the city. In some cases, both parents spoke Irish. In others, only one parent was a proficient speaker. The latter differed somewhat from the rural Gaeltacht parents whom I have just mentioned. The fact that even one parent spoke Irish was preceived as an achievement and sufficient basis for raising the children with Irish.

Some interesting details about the acquisition of Irish in such circumstances were gleaned from interviews with some of these children, in later years, when they had reached adulthood. It was found that their parents' aspirations about raising bilingual families were in some ways frustrated, without the support of a closely knit Irish speaking community. For example, in several families it was found that the commitment required to withstand anglicising pressures could not be sustained as the family grew. Consequently, although the oldest children were raised to speak Irish with one parent, the youngest children were reared with English only or predominantly.

Furthermore, the isolation factor often influenced the children's attitude towards the language. Several people described unhappy experiences at school when well-meaning teachers "paraded" the young wonders around the school as examples of

what could be achieved linguistically. Naturally, this type of experience had a detrimental effect on the child.

In later years, although some of this generation chose to raise their own children with Irish, others made a conscious decision not to do so. One person explained this attitude by his preference to allow his children to chose whether or not to acquire Irish, in their own time.

Clearly, the objective of raising children as Irish speakers in the city, without the back-up of supportive educational and social resources, is frought with complications. It was precisely an awareness of the these complications that inspired a younger generation of couples, in the late sixties, to build a cohesive social framework which would ease and enhance the experience of raising Irish speaking families. Having learned Irish themselves, in adulthood, these couples determined to create a Gaeltacht neighbourhood wherein their children could acquire Irish as their first language and grow up happy and free to use it.

Indeed, that newspaper article which referred to the existence of Irish speaking families throughout the city was actually reporting on this innovative and pioneering project. On the periphery of a sprawling housing estate in West Belfast, a site was purchased by these founding members of the Gaeltacht Community on the Shaws Road. They then set about constructing the houses. By the close of the sixties, the first of eleven families had taken up residence. The Community children acquired Irish at home, as their mother tongue. Irish was the language used at play and also at Church. The parents founded Belfast's first Irish-medium primary school so that the children's first language could be extended into the area of education. Many families delayed introducing a television into their homes during those early years. Irish was the dominant language in the children's world at that time. English would later assume a stronger role in the linguistic make-up, as the children grew older. Younger siblings were not exposed to Irish with the same degree of intensity as older children, although Irish was still their first language. As children from English speaking families in surrounding neighbourhoods began to enrol at the Bunscoil in order to benefit from an Irish-medium education, the community became the bilingualising focus of the city. Naturally, however, more English was heard and used within the district. More significantly, the older children's transfer to English-medium secondary schools awarded English a greater functional status in their lives. Tension between the use of both languages required constant monitoring by parents in order to protect and develop the position of Irish.

The children who became the subject of the study, which I carried out over a period of several years, ranged from 8 years to 18 years of age. Their use of Irish was characterised by a happy and often playful fluency. Many features of the linguistic

system did indeed show irregularities. Deviant forms were often used alongside more conservative forms. A healthy sense of movement and progress was suggested by the way the children experimented with their Irish, moulding their own variety. Their experience of using Irish as a first language was young and active and full of optimism. In many ways, the linguistic system itself reflected the Community's willingness to be innovative and uninhibited by social pressures.

It is the unfortunate experience of many learners of Irish to have been discouraged and inhibited by other speakers, - fearful of ridicule or correction. However, as first language users, the Shaw's Road children enjoyed a sense of confidence and tolerance in relation to their use of Irish. Accordingly, aberrant linguistic forms often entered their Irish sporadically, as part of the learning process, without trigering negative reactions. Some of these features are examined below, within the context of learning strategies employed by the children. Other significant factors influencing the children's treatment of the spoken language are also considered.

Over-generalisation

Occasionally grammatical rules are over-generalised, so that they are applied in an unconventional context. For example:

1) The syntactic structure contained in the sentence, *"Ba mhaith liom cóta a cheannach"* could well appear where it is not traditionally expected, eg. *"Tá mé ag dul cóta a cheannach"*.

2) Certain irregular verbs in the future tense have extended the irregular feature into the present tense, *"rachann tú"*, *"tabharann sé"*. Sometimes, *"gheobhann sé"* may be heard, though from fewer children. Again, it is true that these forms exist alongside more standard alternatives, *"théid sé, téann sé, tugann sé, bheir sé, gheibh sé, faigheann sé"* and that the children draw freely from all of them.

3) The use of "cionn is" has been extended from its normal usage, before the dependent from of the verb,

> *"...cionn is gur tógadh iadsan suas le Béarla"*
> *"...cionn is go bhfuil muid ag labhairt Gaeilge"*

to embrace other possible usages, before verbs, nouns and propostions,

> *"Tá siadsan ag foghlaim Gaeilge cionn is na perks uilig"*
> *"...cionn is na fáthanna sin"*

Simplification

A more common strategy employed by the children is the simplification of linguistic systems and sub-systems. Almost every deviant form used can be explained by this process. The principal concern of the speaker is to enhance easy communication. Complex structures are therefore simplified.

Case system

The case system is one example of a complex system which has already been simplified over the ages as part of a natural process of evolution. Three active cases have survived. In the Irish of the Shaw's Road children these subsystems are subject to further change.

The vocative case has been almost eliminated and the genitive is often simplified. Both of these developments are governed by the tendency to cast off semantically redundant features. Consequently, they do not progress beyond that point where comprehension could be impaired. So, the traditional syntactic order required with the genitive is retained although a preference is shown for use of the noun stem form:

Thóg sé mála an bhean
Bhí hata an fear ina luí ...
i ndiaidh tamall ...
ag cruinniú airgead fá choinne an scoil
Bhí muinne uilig i seomra na caillní

The genitive form does, of course, remain in petrified expressions - *mála scoile, deireadh seachtaine, liathróid láimhe, ag guí chun Dé, dinnéar na Nollag, muintir na háite, mo chuid oibre*, etc.

The children's acquisition of Irish is not characterised simply by the incorporation of irregularities. More accurately, it is characterised by a healty manipulation of and experimentation with standard and non-standard forms. Therefore, in between this deviant and standard treatment of the genitive case, for example, one finds an intermediate area of usage where both forms interchange sporadically and often unpredictably as the children seem to progress towards a wider acceptance of the retention of the traditional syntactic structure with the nominative noun form. For example, during the course of this transitional stage, a preposition is occasionally employed to indicate possession - *na máithreacha de na paistí* (the children's mothers), *páirc le feirmeoir nó rud éigin* (the field of a farmer or someone) However, the same speaker also approximates a more standard form with, *"Leabharthaí na páistí"* (the children's books).

Completely regular usage of the genitive structure is also within the children's repertoire, although this undoubtedly appears most when the genitive is the same as the nominative singular or plural form,

"ó thaobh litríocht na Gaeilge..."
"a chuid ba agus a chuid gabhar"
"Cuir i gcás go ndeachaigh tú chuig lár an bhaile"
Tá sí ag ní na soithí"

Simplification is being applied, therefore, by moving towards a point where all nouns are treated in this way, i.e. as the nominative. Along the way, some fluctuation between standard and non-standard forms occur. This same pattern is seen in other areas of the language.

VERBAL SYSTEM

Within the verbal system, it is also clear that the process of simplification is underway. For example, the imperfect tense has virtually disappeared from the children's repertoire, often merging with the conditional (a development which is already well established in Scottish Gaelic). However, once more the rule of thumb applies whereby deviations from norm must not impede comprehension. Accordingly, the children have no difficulty expressing the sense of past habitual. Often the use of an adverb of time is employed to emphasise this sense:

a) **Ba ghnách leis** *dul chuig Naomh Muire.*
b) **Ba ghnách liomsa i gcónaí** *a rá le mo mhamaí.*
c) **Bhí Máire i gcónaí** *ag teacht abhaile sa tacsaí.*
d) ...**bheadh muid** *uilig ag ceol ...*
e) **In amannaí déarfadh,** *bheadh sí ag rá ...*

The disappearance of the imperfect tense is compensated by the children's command of the conditional, which they employ competently.

Further simplifications are evident in the preference for a Verbal Noun + personal pronoun structure, instead of the traditional use of a preposition and possessive adjective:

eg. *"bhí siad ag ceol é go binn".*

It is not surprising, therefore that there are also signs of developing a tendency towards the verbal noun instead of a possessive adjective, in examples, such as "bhí mé a seasamh".

Although the conservative form is still in use, this development is currently passing through an intermediate stage, characterised by the same fluctuations as we have seen in other areas. Clearly, the children are trying out different forms as they search for that which most comfortably meets their own needs. The verbal noun type structure is arrived at by a generalisation of the third person and a reduction of *"ina"* to *"a"*.

Tá sé ina shuí
V
Bhí tusa ina shuí
V
Tá sé a suí / bhí muinne a cónaí / ... bhí a luí

Deviations from linguistic norms, incorporated into the children's speech (whether as a fairly consistent development or as a more occasional diversion) tend to fall into cluster patterns. For example, the general weakening of the possessive adjective in the above structures is found in other similar structures, such as with prepositions and compound prepositions. This development is compensated by the use of a pronoun:

ar cúl iad
i ndiaidh é
i ndiaidh tú
thar é

Preference for use of personal pronouns is dictated by the children's desire for simplicity and clarity. Sometimes, therefore, the pronoun accompanies the synthetic form of the verb:

feicim mé iad
rachfá tú

These occurrences are not constant. The conservative forms - *sílim, gheobhaimid, rachfá, thitfeá*, etc. are produced more frequently. Nevertheless, irregular forms may alternate with the latter. The personal pronoun may also be used with the analytic form of the verb in preference to the synthetic form : *dá mbeadh mé*

Although this is most often seen with an emphatic pronoun:
déanann mise / labhraíonn muidne / téann mise.

NUMERALS

Another area which has been simplified is the complex use of numerals in Irish. So many second language learners would breathe a sigh of relief if this could be formally

simplified. A strong tendency exists for the numeral to precede the noun, *"cúig déag tablaí"*, *"fiche a cúig punt"*. Often, the plural form of the noun is used. Ordinals are used, though the more common ones - *céad, dara, tríú, ceathrú*, are the only ones which may be predicted. Otherwise, cardinals may be used instead. Personal numerals are also used. Similarly, predictable use is restricted to the lower numbers, *beirt, triúr, ceathrar*.

INITIAL MUTATION

It has been mentioned that the patterns of change hinge upon the tendency for deviation in one area to trigger a series of deviations in related areas. Accordingly the weakening of the initial mutation system influences development across a wide range of linguistic areas, including the phonological system.

General characteristics

The degree of alternation between standard and non-standard forms in any one individual's speech is one of the signs of a language in everyday use within a context of a more global pattern of language change. The Community within which the children reside is taking the lead in a broader bilingualisation process, now drawing support from neighbouring areas as well as further afield. Changing language behaviour in the opposite direction - that is away from bilingualism - causes many of the same linguistic developments at the intermediate stage. Holmer, for example, identified the collapse of the initial mutation system as the first main indication of a decaying language. This was based upon his study of Irish before it died out in Antrim. The decaying genitive was also a feature of the Irish in Rathlin and in parts of Scotland before it died out. In the case of an incipient language, however, one treads a fine line between tolerance and control of linguistic change.

Above all, working with these children has taught me to appreciate the healty aspects of a young speech community playing with alternate forms, moulding, manipulating and experimenting with their language, confident in its efficient and satisfying usage in response to their needs.

A variety of factors have some impact upon the nature of change and deviation which is tolerated within the linguistic system. Some of these are themselves linguistic, others social.

Influence of English must constitute the primary factor exercising an impact upon the linguisic system. The process of simplifying linguistic features in Irish usually results in an eradication of characteristics foreign to the English system. Consequently, syntactic and semantic transference enters their Irish. The influence of

English is also seen in the children's treatment of emphasis. Although they do employ emphatic pronouns and one copula structure to suggest emphasis (*Seán a bhí ann*), the principal technique used by the children is simply to adjust pitch, volume and vowel length. Consequently, stress falls on words which traditionally resist it, such as simple prepositions:

Thaistil sé ó Bhéal Feirste
Páistí ar ar scoil
mo mhamaí

Another technique is to draw the emphasied item to the fore, preceded by a preposition:

You know Máire, tá cara aici ...
Ach le Michéal, tháinig seisean anseo

The geographical position of Belfast is another factor. Not every family has ready access to contact with Gaeltacht areas and other Irish speaking communities. When this study was commenced only a couple of children had been to the Gaeltacht. Annual trips would now be the norm for many of them (as they discover some of the social advantages to be enjoyed on Gaeltacht trips!) Generally, the children share a sentiment expressed by many second language learners which basically questions the relevance of rural Gaeltacht life to their linguistic needs, as well as the practicalities involved. One 17 year old boy conveyed this idea fairly lucidly:

"Like téann tú amach ansin agus tá na crainn seo ann agus tá na crainn galanta, na bá deas agus na caora deas. Ach i ndiaidh tamall éiríonn sé sort tuirsiúil. Chomh maith le labhairt ró gasta agus ag caint ró gasta le blas aisteach, like, usann siad focail nár chuala mise riamh. Is buntáiste acusan, ní mórán de bhuntáiste agamsa atá ann. .....
..... Tógann tú do chineál nósanna cainte féin agus usann tú na focail a bheadh a dhíth ort agus ní bhacann tú le rud ar bith eile. Bhuel is maith an rud é go dtí go dtagann tú chuig áit nó duine a mbacann leis an cineál rud sin ....."

A more significant factor is, of course, the linguistic environment from which the children draw example and stimulation. Irish is very much the learners' language in Belfast. In West Belfast one finds the heart of the language revival movement. The fact that a Community there could raise their children with Irish as the first language has inspired many others to learn the language themselves and to introduce it to their children via Irish-medium education. Irish as a second language is much more common within the wider community. Indeed, the children's parents and teachers learned it as a second language. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the linguistic output of the children shares many of the features of the second language learner.

Within this learners' environment, the children show considerable sensitivity to the linguistic needs of, peers, neighbours, schoolfriends, etc. The incorporation of English transfer items into their spoken Irish is just as likely to be done on the listener's behalf as for any other reason. If the children thought that the listener may not be familiar with a word in Irish they would use the English equivalent.

Tolerance of irregularities is subject to the children's own group monitoring system. Sometimes one young person would correct an aberrant form produced by another, or supply a lexical item which eluded the latter. This was always done naturally and in an unconspicious manner.

Approximation to linguistic norms is also carried out in more formal situations. I rarely asked a child to translate a word or phrase into Irish. However, on the rare occasion when this was done, a simplified or reduced form was offered first, followed by some lively group debate which produced the more standard form or an alternative. For example - I asked a group of 12 year olds the Irish for "you are living". The initial response produced, *"Tá tú a cónaí"*. Several children disputed the accuracy of this simplified version and offered the standard form, *"Tá tú i do chónaí"*. The discussion which followed was brought cheerfully to an end when one of the children shouted an alternative, *"Cónaíonn tú"*.

The children are also aware that written Irish requires more rigid conformity to linguistic norms than is necessary in everyday speech.

Furthermore, as the child grows older, his personal needs may demand some abandonment of irregular forms, in preference for standard forms. Preparation of public examinations directs more attention towards grammatical norms. Participation in language related activities may also have this effect. Two of the children became involved in journalistic enterprises. Others became active in the area of public speaking. These developments called for stricter self-imposed linguistic controls.

Those children who show some tendency to retain irregular features more consistently became affiliated to peer groups outside the Community, at an early stage. What all the children have in common, however, is their fluency and confidence as Irish speakers.

Despite the comments of the 17 year old boy about the rural Gaeltacht, communication with native speakers poses no difficulty for the children. I observed this fact myself during various visits to Donegal with them. The children themselves displayed a certain degree of mischievousness and humour when they related accounts of their experiences in this area. They show an appreciation of linguistic diversity and they value their own variety as highly as any other.

During the many hours of recording sessions, they chatted happily and competently about a very wide range of subjects. They produced their own puns, jokes, rhymes, popsongs, etc. in Irish. They also showed an uncanny insight into factors which influenced their own use of Irish. For example, they explained how they would introduce an English lexical item when the Irish equivalent did not come immediately to mind. Uninterrupted communicative flow was of greater importance. However, they realized that the incorporation of lexical transfers would often trigger a switch to English without the speakers being aware of it at the time. (Indeed, lexical transfers also influenced syntax, eg. *("Tá sé student ... Tá sí student fosta")*. One group of thirteen year old girls identified conversation topic as a factor which caused a switch to English. Irish simply was not "trendy" enough to handle certain topics. The same girls realized that this attitude was largely influenced by television.

Despite the above observations, the children do not spend much time contemplating patterns of language behaviour nor dwelling upon the achievements of their parents, as founders of the Shaw's Road Gaeltacht. However, when these subjects were explored with them, it became apparent that these children love their Irish. They feel special and advantaged as native Irish speakers. The children's linguistic adaptability is inextricably linked to their positive attitudes towards the language, in general.

Some degree of fluctuation between standard and non-standard linguistic forms is to be expected, given the dynamic nature of the shift towards bilingualism which this Community has spearheaded. However, it has been mentioned that many of the linguistic features of the children's spoken Irish have also been identified in the language of learners and of moribund speech communities. The Shaw's road children, as members of an incipient bilingual community, share some of the linguistic vulnerability of those other communities. Slowing the pace of linguistic change and controlling its direction, as urban bilingualism continues to gather momentum, can be achieved effectively within the framework of more formal language planning. One example of an area in need of development is the voluntary adult class provision. The many voluntary teachers of adult evening classes deserve professional support and training along with access to a centralised resource centre.

In the meantime, however, the lingistic versatility and resilience of these young people, reared as Irish speakers in West Belfast, remains a source of encouragement to anyone considering raising their family through Irish.

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Developmental Stages in the Acquisition of Irish Phonology and Initial Mutations

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This paper endeavors to give a general outline of possible developmental stages for certain aspects of Irish when that language is acquired as a first language. There are two important and theoretical issues to be considered in dealing with the learning of the sound system of Irish as L1, and about which we know very little. They include the development of the palatalised/velarised contrast in the consonantal system and the initial consonant changes normally referred to as 'the initial mutations'. The former changes are phonemic, whereas the latter must be classified in most cases as morphophonemic, similar to the alternations found in such English words as **wife/wives, house/houses** etc.. This type of classification may prove useful in analysing our data, since phonemic distinctions of necessity convey meaning, while morphophonemic alternations do not carry such a heavy semantic load. In adult speech, therefore, it is important to distinguish between the sound of initial and final 'c' in **cearc** 'a hen' phonemically /caɾk /. This same contrast can be seen in such minimal pairs as **cad** 'what' and **cead** 'permission', respectively /kad/ and /cad/ in phonemic notation. The changes seen in **an chearc** 'the hen' /əçaɾk/ and **mo chead** 'my permission' /məçad/while characteristic of the language, are not essential for overall understanding, whatever about effective communication.

This presentation will describe the initial attempts by two children learning Irish in a bilingual setting in Dublin, in coming to grips with these fundamental sound differences and changes. The data described here was collected over a fairly extended period beginning in January, 1977 for the eldest child Caitríona and continuing until February of 1980, when she was aged 4yr. 1 mth. In the case of the second child Fionnuala, recording began in September 1978 and continued until March, 1980, when she was 2 yr. 7 mth. The children were recorded every month or six weeks, for periods of 30/60 minutes each time. An extensive diary was also kept for each child during the same periods. These diaries contain much additional information about the kind of language used by the children outside of the recorded sessions already mentioned. The material in the diaries are accompanied in most cases by an on the spot phonetic transcription. The data in the diaries was recorded weekly and in many instances on a daily basis.

The study of the acquisition of Irish as first language can contribute to our knowledge of the language itself and also make its own contribution to theories

of language acquisition, in general. There are many features of Irish which can make a valuable contribution to the growing body of research on crosslinguistic comparison. There is much of interest in how Irish surface VSO word order is acquired, as well as the effect of initial mutations which are compulsory with negative and interrogative particles, for example, on the overall development of its phrasal and clausal structure. While the data collected from the two children reflect on these issues, I have limited my discussion in this contribution to the development of the consonantal system and how that development interacts with the the processes of initial mutation, which affect the initial consonant in the basic forms of verbs, nouns and adjectives in specific, well defined syntactic environments. Other aspects dealing with semantic, pragmatic and syntactic issues in the acquisition of Irish, will be discussed in work in preparation.

The children were exposed to a rich and varied phonological system which contained the following phonemically contrasting consonant segments as shown on the next page. In the transcription used the velarised consonants are left unmarked while the palatalised consonants are written with a following 'j', according to the new IPA convention, except in those cases where the IPA has a specific symbol for a particular palatalised sound.

Initial attempts at producing the palatalised/velarised contrast was controlled and heavily influenced by the place of articulation of each consonant or consonant group. Thus, amongst various homorganic consonant groups, that is those consonants which share a common point of articulation, certain tendencies in the form of processes/rules were noticeable. Therefore, if we divide the consonant inventory of Irish into the following major classes, namely, the velar consonants 'k, g and ng', the labial consonants 'p, b, and m' and the alveolar/ dental consonants such as 'd, t, n, l and s', we will see how the various tendencies mentioned above manifest themselves.

Before discussing the development of particular consonant classes it is better first of all to point out what exactly is involved in producing a velarised or a palatalised consonant. Velarisation may be described in most cases as the coordination of two different tongue movements. This means that each consonant has a primary and a secondary articulation. In the case of a velarised [t] for example, primary articulation is achieved by placing the tip/blade of the tongue against the upper teeth and secondary articulation is achieved by raising the back of the tongue at the same time towards the velum or back of the mouth. It is this raising of the tongue that gives the velarised consonants their particular 'timbre'. Now in the case of velarised [b] of course, their is no primary tongue placement. What is needed is that the lips are drawn together and slightly

The Irish Consonant System

p	pj		t	tj	c	k		
b	bj		d	dj	ɟ	g		
f	fj		s	ʃ	ç	x		h
w	vj				j	ɣ		
m	mj	n̪	n̪j	n	nj	ɲ	ŋ	
		l̪	l̪j	l	lj			
		r		ɾ	ɾj			
				tʃ	dʒ			

Notes: The consonants /f, fj, w, vj/ are often bilabial fricatives in many dialects, including those to which the children were exposed. The four way contrast between the 'l' and 'n' types is not found in all dialects. The three way contrast in the 'r' series is limited to Ulster Irish. The /tʃ/, /dʒ/ contrast occurs in loanwords from English.

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protruded, while at the same time raising the back of the tongue in the same fashion as mentioned earlier for [t]. In the case of [g] of course, the primary point of articulation is the velum (the soft palate) itself and the secondary articulation is not as salient, although easily perceived, as for consonants which have their point of primary articulation further forward in the mouth. It will be obvious, therefore, that a certain and varied amount of phonetic gymnastics is called for in the production of particular consonants in Irish.

During the production of what we are calling 'palatalised consonants' there is also both a primary and a secondary articulation. This means that that part of the tongue which is free (not being used in the primary articulation) is fronted and raised upwards towards the hard palate. This raising is particularly noticeable in the case of the labials and alveolar/dental consonants (i.e. /pj, bj, tj, dj, lj etc/ but to a lesser degree in the case of the back or 'velar' consonants /c, ç, ɲ / etc.. In the latter case, the primary and secondary articulation coincides more or less at the junction of the hard and soft palate.

In the case of both children the velarised/palatalised distinction was maintained from the very beginning. It should be pointed out, however, that the distinction was manifested in different ways, depending on the particular consonant group/ class in question. In general terms one could summarise the initial attempts as follows:

(a) The velarisation of /b, p, f, β / was not achieved or realised fully. Instead, these consonants could be described as halfvelarised - the back of the tongue being raised to a position halfway between the neutral tongue position and the position required to pronounce the high back vowel [u]. The fronted or palatalised counterparts /bj, pj, fj, βj / were pronounced with neutral quality initially, but soon developed a palatalised pronunciation.

(b) the avleolar/dental consonants when velarised were generally pronounced with the tongue tip touching the alveolar (teeth) ridge with simultaneous raising of the back of the tongue, as required. However, the /t/ and /d/ sounds to which these children were exposed have a dental articulation, with the blade of the tongue touching the upper teeth and alveolar ridge. Their initial attempts at immitating this 'dental' quality was achieved by placing the tip of the tongue between the alveolar ridge and the upper teeth. This of course also helped them to realise and maintain the essential phonemic distinction between alveolar (tongue tip) /t/ as in cúl 'back', ag ól 'drinking', etc., and the dental (tongue blade) articulation used in pronouncing

the double 'll' in words like **poll** 'a hole', **balla** 'a wall', etc., to which they were being continuously exposed. In a phrase such as **ag ól**, therefore, the 'l' was pronounced with the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge while the l-sound in **poll** was realised in the beginning at any rate by placing the tip of the tongue against the upper teeth and between the teeth and the alveolar ridge. This important phonemic contrast was realised and maintained in this way over a period of up to 3-6 months until the l-consonants in such words as **lón** 'lunch', **poll** 'a hole', **capall** 'a horse', **balla** 'a wall', etc., began to be realised by blade tongue articulation against the upper teeth and teeth ridge.

(c) the velar consonants /k/, /g/ and /ŋ/ caused very few problems and were acquired early. They are similar in articulation to the corresponding sounds in such English words as duck, dug and dung, although the added 'velarisation' can be easily detected in such words as [kʰa ŋ] **cam** 'crooked', [mʊg] **mug** 'a mug', etc., where the entire syllable is, as it were, 'velarised'. As a consequence of this velarisation the stressed vowels in such words as **cam** 'crooked', **capall** 'horse', **mug** 'a mug', etc., have allophonic realisations of the phonemes /a/ and /u/ that are articulated much further back in the mouth than would be the norm in languages with nonvelarised or neutral consonants, as in English for example. The corresponding palatalised velars /c/ and /ɟ/ were also acquired fairly early. The point of primary articulation for these consonants was the intersection of the hard and soft palate. They contrasted with velar(ised) /k/ and /g/ across and within lexical items. Similar sounds exist as allophonic realisations of /k/ and /g/ in such English words as keep, get etc. In English [c] and [ɟ] are conditioned and can occur only in the immediate environment of front vowels. In Irish, however, since /c/ is a phoneme it can occur adjacent to front and back vowels.

There is a fourth category/group of consonants whose development we have not mentioned so far, although they play an important and pivotal role in the formation of the Irish phonological system and are responsible for many morphophonemic alternations in the morphology of verbs, nouns and adjectives. They are normally referred to in the linguistic literature as sonorants, and although they are consonantal segments, one of their prime characteristics is their similarity to vowels. This natural class includes the liquids (the 'l' and 'r' sounds) and the nasals. The acquisition of this difficult but important subset of the Irish phonological system will not be discussed further here but will be addressed at a later point.

During the one word stage, which took place for both children between 12 - 18 months, we can see the usual type of structural simplification often reported from child language studies, namely the absence of consonant clusters, the overwhelmimg use of open syllables (syllables that end in a vowel) and great variation in the pronunciation of sonorants. The data given below shows ample evidence of these processes at work. I give first of all a phonetic transcription of the word attempted, together with its Irish spelling and an English gloss. This is followed by a phonemic transcription of the adult speech form. I have divided the list up into different sections in order to focus on or clarify a particular development.

Group 1:

[aˑʒi]	*airgead*	*'money'*	/arjəɪəd̪/
[caˑk]	*cearc*	*'a hen'*	/carc/
[kʰakəɬ]	*capall*	*'a horse'*	/kʰapəɬ̪/
[makəɬ]	*camall*	*'a camel'*	/kʰaməɬ̪//kʰuljikʰam/
[kuji kaŋ]	*coillí cam*	*'puppy crooked' (Pet name for a dog)*	
[ba:gɔg]	*bábóg*	*'a doll'*	/ba:bɔˑg/
[mʊg]	*mug*	*'a mug'*	/mug/

Group 2:

[tji:nə]	*(Cai)tríona*		/kətjrji:nə/
[djɛdji]	*Deaidí*	*'Daddy'*	/djædjiˑ/
[etjɪ]	*eitleán*	*'an aeroplane'*	/etjəɬaˑn/
[tʰe:]	*tae*	*'tea'*	/tʰe:/
[baɬ̪a] [baɬ̪ə]	*bata*	*'a stick'*	/baɬ̪ə/
[ba:d̪]	*bád*	*'a boat'*	/ba:d̪/

Group 3:

[bo:] [bo:g]	*bróg*	*'a shoe'*	/bro:g/
[bi:ə bɔ:]	*ag blí na bó*	*'milking the cow'*	/ə blji:ə n̪ə bɔ:/
[pa:pi]	*páipéar*	*'a paper'*	/pa:pʲe:r/
[baɬ̪a] [baɬ̪ə]	*bata*	*'a stick'*	/baɬ̪ə/
[ba:d̪]	*bád*	*'a boat'*	/ba:d̪]
[ba:gɔg]	*bábóg*	*'a doll'*	/ba:bɔˑg/

Group 4:

[e:ɟĭɟi·]	*éiníní*	*'little birds'*	/e:nji·nji·/
[baĭɟɪ]	*bainne*	*'milk'*	/baɲɪ/

[ɲo:ə]	*leabhar*	*'a book'*	/ʎo:əɾ/
[tji:nə]	*(Cai)tríona*		/kətjɾji:nə/
[k^hakə$\ddagger$]	*capall*	*'a horse'*	/k^hapə$\ddagger$/
[makə$\ddagger$]	*camall*	*'a camel'*	/k^hamə$\ddagger$/
[kuji kaŋ]	*coilí cam*	*'puppy crooked' (Pet name for a dog)**	
[ʃi:jɪ]	*Síle*	*'Sheila'*	/ʃi:ljɪ/
[u:ljɪ]	*úlla*	*'an apple'*	/u:$\ddagger$ə/
[jaxə]	*lacha*	*'a duck'*	/$\ddagger$axə/
			*/k^hulji k^ham/

Group 5:

[jaxə]	*lacha*	*'a duck'*	/$\ddagger$axə/
[uβ]	*ubh*	*'an egg'*	/uβ]
[ʃi:jɪ]	*Síle*	*'Sheila'*	/ʃi:$\downarrow$jɪ]
[m^jiʃɪ]	*mise*	*'me (emph.)*	/m^jɪʃɪ/

The Velar Consonants (Group 1)

As can be seen from the transcriptions the palatal(ised)/velar quality of the consonants, as exemplified in adult speech, was maintained throughout. Furthermore in a word like **cearc(a)** [caɾk (ə)] 'a hen/hens' we see the contrast between palatal(ised) /c/ and /k/ being established. Similarly, perhaps in **airgead** [a·ɾi] 'money' and **mug** [mʊ g] 'a mug', while not in any way a minimal or even near minimal pair, we have some indication of how the contrast /g/ : /ɟ/ begins to establish itself. As we shall see this contrast becomes less stabilised later on due to the intervention of certain rules/processes where velars tend to interchange with their alveolar counterparts.

The simplification of initial, intermediate or final consonant clusters is shown by the pronunciation of such words as **eitleán** [eʧɪ] 'an aeroplane'; **airgead** [a·ɾi] 'money'; **cearc** [c^ha·k] 'a hen'; **(Cai)tríona** [tji:nə]' personal name (female)'; **bróg** [bo :] (later [bo:g] 'a shoe'; **ag blí na bó** [bji:əbɔ:] 'milking (of) the cow'.

The dental and alveo-dental stop consonants were all reduced to tongue tip alveolar and this was especially true of the palatalised alveo-dental /tj/ and /dj/ sounds. In the case of /t/ and /d/ tongue contact was again made by placing the tip between the alveolar (teeth) ridge and the upper front teeth. In the case of the word **tae** 'tea' initial /t/ was a tongue tip alveolar consonant with concomitant velarisation. This /t/ contrasted with the /$\underline{t}$/ in **bata** 'a stick', the latter having a slighty more 'dental' articulation, as described earlier.

The Sonorants

The development of the sonorants follows along well developed phonetic lines and can be traced through different, but in many cases, overlapping stages. In the beginning they are very rare, occurring only in a small number of lexical items. Their pronunciation was modified by the application of various processes and substitutions well known from numerous first language (L1) acquisition studies. Our data would seem to indicate that development procedes along the following lines.

(i) /m/ and /mj/ in initial position are quite common. In syllable final position they tend to substituted by /ɒ̃/ and /ɒ̃ʲ/, due mainly to the process which assimilates consonants within syllable. In this way we see that **cam** 'crooked' becomes /kaɒ̃/ whereas **camall** 'a camel' becomes /makəl/. This is due to the metathesis of /m/ and /k/, a rule or process which is widespread in L1 acquisition data. The desire or drive towards syllable final velar consonants is a strong one and is also observed in **capall** 'a horse' pronounced /kʰakəl/ and later on in **hata** 'a hat' which appears as /hakə/.

(ii) The development of the n-phonemes is more difficult to trace due to two main factors (a) the scarcity of lexical items containing appropriate examples and (b) the rich system of contrasts found in the speech registers to which the two children were exposed. At least four phonemic contrasts are maintained in these registers, namely, /n/, /nj/ /ɲ/ and /ɲ/. The velarised /n/ is found only in the proper name (Cai)tríona /tji:nə/. Initially we find /ɲ/ in /ɲo:/ leabhar 'a book' where it is substituted for /ʎ/. Intervocalically, both /nj/ and /ɲ/ are realised as a nasalised glide /j̃/. This substitution is found in words like **éiníní** [e:jĩji:] 'little birds' and **bainne** [bãĩj̃ɪ] 'milk'.

The l-phonemes show similar developments. Intervocalically and initially they tend to become [j] as shown by [ʃi:jɟ] **Síle** 'Sheila', [kuji] **coilí** 'a pup' and [jaxə] **lacha** 'a duck'. Syllable final velarised blade dental [l] seems to have two realisations. In words such as **capall** 'a horse' and **camall** 'a camel', they are pronounced as velarised tip alveolar consonants as shown by [kʰakəl] and [makəl]. In some other words such as **úlla** 'an apple' [u:ljɪ] they are palatalised and in some words 'll' may have dental blade articulation as in **Dónall** 'Personal name (male)' [do:nal].

The Fricatives

The fricative consonants are represented at this stage of language development by [β], [x] and [f]. The latter is the only fricative which can occur in initial position. In adult speech both [β] and [x] may occur initially, intervocalically or word finally. However, their appearance in initial position is due to the application of the morphophonemic process of initial mutation, where they are derived from [b] and [k], respectively. The appearance of this process in the speech of the children did not happen until much later.

Unmarked Consonants

There is a certain amount of evidence which seems to point to the palatalised consonants as being the unmarked class, at around the 18 month stage. This is seen in particular in the realisation of English lexical items. What is particularly striking about the phonetic realisation of these words? I will mention two main tendencies (a) the fact that most consonants are palatalised, the rest being neutral and (b) the occurrence of [ʎ] and [rj], which are not found at this stage in the pronunciation of the indigenous Irish vocabulary.

(a) [djo: we:ᵊβe:ᵊ] 'Go away'
[nɔ:ˢ] 'No'
[a: juβ e·lʲʎ] 'Are you well?'
[tji·məin məiʃ] 'Three blind mice'

(b) [rjʌnj] 'run'
[dʲaʎi] 'a dolly'

Palatalisation in Native Vocabulary Items

Within the indigenous vocabulary and during the period 19-22 months, the velarised/palatalised contrast was beginning to be well established. This stabilisation was again upset by the well known process by which velarised consonants are fronted and become alveolar. The outcome of this process is complicated still further by a different process of consonant assimilation within syllables. In order to clarify how these processes apply and/or interact it is necessary and indeed more informative to divide the consonants into different classes.

(i) Fronting of velar stops

The process which fronts stop consonants such as /k/ and /g/ to /t/ and /d/ has been amply reported from child language studies. In Irish of course, there is also

the extra possibility of fronting palatalised /c/ and /ɟ/. However, the fronting process itself although interesting is not what I want to focus on here. Instead, I want to look at the consequent change in the quality of the fronted consonants, namely, the palatalisation of inherently velarised consonants.

This would seem to indicate that, in initial position at least (and I suspect in other positions as well), the palatalised consonants are the unmarked class. If other studies should vindicate this tendency, then the consequences for the learning and teaching of Irish, and in particular the acquisition of its phonological system are many.

In the following examples we see that the phonemic distinction between /k/ and /c/ is neutralised as /tj/ and the contrast between /g/ and /ɟ/ as /dj/. However, many words have two pronunciations. In some cases the adult phoneme is realised correctly alongside the fronted variant (see scamaill 'clouds'); in other cases neither pronunciations corresponds to the adult form (see glas 'green').

(a) [kʰəmɪʎ]/[tjamɪʎ]	**scamaill**	'clouds'	/skamɪʎ/
(b) [tʰjaih max iˈ]	**caith amach í**	'throw her out'	/kaihˈ 'max i:/
(c) [ɟas:]/[djas:]	**glas**	'green'	/glas:/
(d) [djɔ:l baɪ̯ʒɪ]	**ag ól bainne**	'drinking milk'	/əˌgɔ:l baɲɪ /
(e) [djɔˑəm]	**gorm**	'blue'	/gɔrəm/
(f) [djo:nal̪]	**Dónall**		/do:nəl̪/
(g) [mətʰjödj]	**mo chuid**	'mine, my dinner	/mə xödj/
(h) [tʰjat]	**cat**	'a cat'	/kat/
(i) [tjɛtʰji:nə/	**Caitríona**		/kaˈtʰrji:nə/
(j) [tʰjæljiːnʲma(ih)]	**cailín maith**	'a good girl'	/kaljiːnʲma(ih)/
(k) [tʰo:tə/tʰjo:t ə]	**cóta**	'a coat'	/ko:tə/
(l) [tʰöp:ə]	**cupa**	'a cup'	/köp:ə/
(m) [du:nə]	**gúna**	'a gown/dress'	/gu:nə/

The last two examples (l) and (m) are interesting because of the absence of palatalisation. I can't explain why this should be so for (l). In the case of (m), however, the rule of palatalisation is blocked (presumably) by the application of the assimilation rule which applies to closed syllables of the type CVC, that is syllables that begin and end in a consonant. Thus a word like [du:nə]is derived from [gu:nə] in the following manner.

[gu:nə] >> [du:nə] >> [du:nə].

Compare this with the derivation of [tʰo:tə]/[tjo:tə] below.

[kʰo:t̪ə] >> [t̪ʰo:t̪ə] >> [tʲjo:t̪ə]

Since the fronted /g/ of **gúna** ends up being pronounced as a velarised [d], it is not palatalised presumably because there is no corresponding alveolar [dj], either in the adult phonological system or in children's developing system at this particular point. This would seem to indicate a preference to palatalise only those consonant sounds which have a phonemic palatalised counterpart with blade tongue articulation in the adult language, as exemplified by the variant [tʰjo:tə].

The Palatalised Series

When we turn to examine the palatalised series, however, we are immediately struck by the preponderence of tongue blade articulated alveo-palatal consonants, especially word initally and intervocalically. This is particularly obvious within the sonorant group where, despite the fact that in adult speech a phonemic contrast exists between tongue tip alveolars and tongue blade articulated consonants, as exemplified by such pairs as **mil/mill** [mjɪlj]/[mjɪʎ] 'honey/destroy' and **sine/sinne** [ʃɪnjɪ]/[ʃɪɲɪ] 'older/we(emph.)', the overwhelming preference amongst the children is for [ʎ] and [ɲ]. The process of substituting alveolar stops for palatal velars, and the assimilation of initial consonants in CVC syllables, whereby the place features of the final consonant is copied, is again quite prominent. The data given below contains examples of all these processes in operation. [s] to [ʃ] (velarised dental sibilant to palatalised alveo-palatal)

[ʃuəʃ]	**suas** 'upwards (away from speaker)'	/suəs/
[hi:ʃəʃɪnj]	**thíos ansin** 'down there'	/hi:sɪnjʃɪnj/
[ʃɔljɪʃ]	**solas** 'a light'	/sɔɬəs/
[ʃu:djaˢ]	**súdar** ' a soother'	/su:dəɾ/

[ʎ] to [ɲ] (alveo-palatal lateral to alveo-palatal nasal)

[ɲe:iɲo:ə]	**léigh an leabhar**	'read the book'	/ ʎe:jəʎo:ɾ/
[ɲo:ən]	**leon**	'a lion'	/ʎo:n/
[ɲo:əmjɪʃɪ]	**leabhar mise**	'my(emph.) book'	/ʎo:əɾmjɪʃɪ/

Fronting of [ɟ] to [dj]

[ɟetjɪʎtj]/[djetjɪʎtj]	**ag eitilt** 'flying'	/ɪɟitjiʎtj]
[ʎaʎax]	**gealach** 'the moon'	/ɟaɬax/

[ɾ] to [ɾj]

[tjɪɾjɪɾjua]	**an t-iora rua** 'the squirrel'	/ətjɪɾəɾjuə/

The [ɾj] in the previous example could be described as an alveo-palatal consonant where the blade of the tongue makes contact with the alveolar ridge and the tip hangs down behind the front teeth. There is a lot of friction during its production and it is acoustically very similar to English [ʒ]. It should be pointed out, however, that although the above allophone of the palatalised /ɾj/ phoneme was acquired very early, a stabalised pronunciation norm was not achieved until quite sometime later. The most common pronunciation of /ɾj/ is an alveolar palatalised tap [ɾj]. It is generally agreed that this is a difficult sound to acquire as evidenced in the speech habits of thousands of learners of Irish as a second language (L2). It proved equally difficult in the case of the children reported on here. The difficulty may also be related to the fact that a phonemic counterpart to /ɾj/, namely, /ɾ/ must also be acquired if effective communication in Irish is to be achieved.

Consonant Clusters

The acquisition of consonant clusters will not be dealt with in any great detail here, although a synopsis of the main lines of development would not be out of place. A glance at the data available up to 18 months, which includes the two/three word stage, shows a clear absence of consonant clusters of all sorts and in all positions within a word. However, during the perios 19-21 months, consonant clusters begin to appear especially in intervocalic positions and in word final position for homorganic consonants. In intervocalic position the appearance of clusters is initially optional, but becomes an established feature of the children's speech in a relatively short period of time. The data given below outlines the various stages leading up to the use of consonant clusters as a permanent feature of the children's speech.

[ic ɪ]	>> [i(ʃ)cɪ]	>> [iʃc ɪ]	**uisce**	'water'
[ɔ̃kilj/ʏ]	>> [ɔ(s)kilj/ʏ]	>>[ɔskilj/ʏ]	**oscail**	'open(vb)'
[ɔwatj ɪ]	>> [ɔ̃wa(ʃ)tj ɪ]	>> [ɔwaʃtj ɪ]	**oráiste**	'an orange'
[əʃɔ]	>> [ɪ njʃɔ̃]		**anseo**	'here'
[bjɪʃ]	**bris** 'break'	>> [bjɪ ʃtj ɪ]	**briste**	'broken'

An interesting feature of the verb **bris** 'break' is that all the recordings I have of this verb in its stative or past participle form **briste** 'broken', contains the consonant cluster [ʃtj]. That is to say there are no manifestations of a pronunciation *[bjɪtjɪ]. This can possibly be explained as follows. The first recording of **bris** 'break' in the speech of the children is in the form [bjɪʃ]. This presumably is the basic form to which additional morphological material may be added. Thus, it should come as no surprise to us, that when the past participle ending '-**te**' [tj] is added to '**bris**', its phonetic realisation is [bjɪ ʃtjɪ]. This is what would be expected.

Here are some more examples of the realisation of two consonants in a homorganic cluster.

[mõ̃ki:] >> [mõ(ɲ)ki:] >> [mõ̠ŋki:]	**moncaí** 'a monkey'
[dj ɪ mpa˙]	**jumpar** 'a jumper'
[ɛfjɪɾtj]	**eilifint** 'an elephant'
[djetjɪʎtj]	**ag eitilt** 'flying'

An interesting feature of homorganic assimilation in consonants is shown by the development of the phrase **preabaire na mbánta** 'a magpie'. In adult speech the phrase is realised as [pjɾjəbɪɾjɪn̪əma:n̪t̪ə]. Interestingly enough when this phrase was first recorded **'mbánta'** appears as [m ã̪ :t ə] with a nasalised vowel and a blade articulated dental stop [t̪]. The 'n' remained optional for some time, but when it came to be an integral part of the children's speech habits, the underlying alveolar [n] was not assimilated to the dental [t̪], as would be normal in adult speech. Instead the assimilation worked in the opposite direction so that the entire cluster became alveolar but nevertheless velarised. Another feature of the pronunciation was the fronting of the /a:/ phoneme in [ma:ntə] as compared to its realisation in [mã̪:t̪ə]. This progressive assimilation process contrasts with the regressive type already established in such palatalised clusters as [ʎtj] and [ɲtj] as shown earlier.

Initial Mutations

The development of the processes of initial mutation, referred to in Irish itself as **séimhiú** and **urú**, was a slow and gradual process, stretching from a period of non-usage through a period of experimentation and finally stabilising in the sense that they were applied and used correctly on a regular basis. It should also be pointed out that **séimhiú** was, by and large, the most common mutation used and in many cases, as we will see later, replaced **urú**.

These processes are often referred to in the linguistic literature as lenition and nasalization, respectively. Since, however, the native terms have a long history of usage within the Irish grammatical tradition, and since the are more familiar to those working within the Irish linguistic tradition, I have decided to adhere to the traditional usage and use these terms in the following sections. First of all, therefore, we must define in clear linguistic terms what exactly is meant by **séimhiú** and **urú**.

Séimhiú is a mutation (a) which involves the conversion of the stop consonants /p, pj, t, tj, k, c, b, bj, d, dj, g, ɟ /, and the labial nasal /m/ to the corresponding (homorganic) fricatives, (b) which changes [s] to [h] and deletes [f]. Histori-

cally, [t] and [d] became the corresponding dental fricatives [θ] and [ð]. However, during the 11th and 12th centuries [θ] was weakened still further to [h] and at around the same time [ð] merged with [γ]. Therefore, in the modern language [t] and [d] become [h] and [γ], respectively. Historically, [m] became by this process of initial mutation a nasalised bilabial fricative [β̃], which contrasted phonemically with a non-nasalised [β], the latter being the mutation of [b].

In the modern language the contrast between a nasalised and a non-nasalised fricative is probably not very functional, although a case could be made for it in some subdialects. In most cases, therefore, [m] and [b] have converged under mutation to bilabial [β] or [w].

Urú on the other hand is a mutation which converts voiceless stops /p, t, k and f/ to voiced /b, d, g and v/, and the basic or underlying voiced stops /b, d, g/ to their corresponding homorganic nasal stops /m, n, ŋ/. Finally, it should be stressed that **séimhiú** and **urú** is applied to the palatalised as well as to the velarised series of consonants, although in our exposition above we adhered to mentioning only the velarised set in certain cases.

Séimhiú is a very common process in the adult language. It is shown in writing by putting 'h' after the affected consonant. The process is obligatory in the following linguistic environments - (a) after various prepositions (**do Sheán** 'to John', **Seán** 'John'); (b) following the definite article when a feminine noun follows (i.e. **an bhean** 'the woman', **bean** 'woman'); (c) on adjectives following feminine nouns (i.e. **an aimsir bhreá** 'the fine weather', **breá** 'fine'); (d) following the particle **'a'** in the vocative case (i.e. **a Mháire** 'Mary', **Máire**, 'Mary'); (e) following other particles such as **an-** 'very', **ró-** 'too' etc., (**an-bhreá** 'very fine' **breá** 'fine'; **rómhór** 'too big', **mór**, 'big')and (f) in the past tense of verbs (i.e. **bhuail** 'hit' from **buail**)

Phrases or sentences exemplifying these usages of **séimhiú** were found in the data from the two children and the main developments are described below. Although the two children had a reasonable vocabulary and certainly enough to sustain **séimhiú** from the two word stage onwards, nevertheless, there are roughly three stages leading up to the acquisition of initial mutations, as follows - (a) the period 18-21 months where there was no examples of **séimhiú**, (b) an intermediate period from 21-24 months when the mutations are first observed but not applied consistantly within the categories outlined in the previous paragraph, and (c) a period from 24-26 months when the mutations begin to stabilise and to be consistantly applied in appropriate environments.

Séimhiú by Category, 21-24 months

Definite Article + Feminine Nouns

Séimhiú		Absence of Séimhiú
an fhuinneog	[ə niɲɔg]	'the window'
an bhábóg	[ə wa:bɔˠg][ə βa:bɔˠg]	'the doll'
an chathaoir	[ən xaijuˠ]	'the chair'

After 'SA/DO'

sa bhath	[səwaʈ]	'in the bath'
sa phota	[sə fɔɻə]	'in the pot'
isteach sa bhéal	[tjax sə βje:lj]	'into the mouth'
istigh sa mhála	[ʃ tjijsə w/βa:ɬə]	'in the bag'
sa bhucaeid	[səwɔ̈ke dj]	'in the bucket'
sa phram	[sə fʷʲ am:]	'in the pram'
do Thríona	[də fj ɻi:nə]	'to (Cai)tríona'

Following Vocative 'A'

a Mhamaí/Mhaimí	[ə wami][w/βamjɾ]	'Mammy!'
a Mháire!	[ə waɾjɪ]	'Máire!'
a phrugaí	[əfʷʲ ug:i]	'Prugaí! (pet name for calf)'
a Chit	[əçɪt]	'Kit!'

Adjectives following Feminine Nouns

deoir bheag	[djɔˠbj/vjɪg:]	'a little drink'

Verbal Forms

thit amach	[hitj max]	'(it) fell out'
Tríona a chuir isteach é	[tji:n əxɔ̈ʃ tjax eˠ]	'It was Tríona that put it in'
Margot a thug dom(h) é	[ma:go: hɔ̈g duw/dɔ̈m a]	'It was Margot who gave it to me'

Non-Application of Séimhiú

The data from this period 21-24 months also contains examples where **séimhiú** had not been applied in a particular environment, although application of the rule is compulsory in adult speech. The greatest fluctuation between application and non-application of the rule is found with feminine nouns with or without a following adjective. Here are some relevant examples of the non-use of **séimhiú.** The absence of séimhiú in word initial position is shown in the data given below by putting ( ) around the 'h', which is the normal way in Irish orthography of marking a consonant as having to undergo **séimhiú.**

Sin an b(h)ó	[ʃ ɪnjən bɔ:]	'That's the cow'
D'imigh an b(h)ábóg	[djɪmji·n ba:bɔ˞g]	'The dolly (has) left'
bábóg m(h)ór imithe	[ba:bɔg mo:ʲɪ mjɪhɪ]	'(The) big dolly is gone missing'
Nuala b(h)ocht	[nuəɬə bɔxt]	'Poor Nuala'
Sin carr D(h)eaidí	[ʃ ɪnj ka:ʲ djadjɪ]	'That's Daddy's car'
Istigh sa c(h)arr	[ʃ tjiʝ səka:ɹ]	'Inside in the car'
Mo c(h)uid	[mə ʧ ödj]	'My portion (dinner)'
An-f(h)ada	[anˈfadə]	'Very long'
Chuir Deaidí isteach ...	[kŏʲ djadjɨ ʃtjaxɛ]	'Daddy put in '
C(h)ic Fionnuala é	[cic fjinu a e˞]	'Fionnuala kicked it'

Period 24-26 months

During this period the use of **séimhiú** became more stabilised and was applied in all the relevant contexts. Even in those contexts where the rule had not been applied consistantly, there were always instances where the use and non-use of the rule occurred side by side in identical or almost identical environments. A process of experimentation existed during this 'optional' period and seems to have been a prerequisite before the stabilisation of the rule in all environments. In the examples given below we see how the 'optional' nature of the **séimhiú** rule has deen discarded in most of the relevant contexts, bringing the linguistic forms used by the children closer to the adult model.

D'imigh an bhean eile	[djɪmjʧ ən vjan ejɪ]	'The other woman left'
Cá bhfuil an bhróg eile?	[ə wɔ :g ejɪ]	'Where is the other shoe?'
Tabhair do Mhiriam é.	[də vjiwiam e˞]	'Give it to Miriam'
Sin carr Bhrendan	[ʃ ɪnj ka:ʲ vjʲ endən]	'That's Brendan's car'
Thart ar do bholgaidh	[hatʰə dəβɔɫəgi]	'Around your tumm (dimin.)'

Tá mé thall anseo sa choirnéal	[sə̨xɔ·njeɬ]	'I am over here in the corner'
Tá siad uilig istigh sa mhála	[sə w/ɸa:ɬə]	'They are all in the bag'
Bhris/Bris gugaí	[vjɪʃ/wɪʃ/bjɪʃ]	'The egg broke'
Cá bhfuil do chóta?	[də xɔ:tə]	'Where's your coat?'
Cá bhfuil mo phingin?	[mö/əfʃi:ɲ]	'Where's my penny?'
Chic mé mar sin é	[çic mje·]	'I kicked it like that'
Cuir isteach sa Mhilton é	[səwɪljənə·]	'Put it in the Milton'
ar an c(h)athaoir	[ə xaijuˇ/kaijuˇ]	'On the chair'
Tríona bhocht!	[tji:nə w ɔxɻ]	'Poor (Cai)tríona!'
Siar faoin chuirtín	[fˇi:n xu· tjinj]	'under the curtain'

URÚ

The acquisition of the **Urú** process/rule, as with **séimhiú**, proceeded along well defined lines. **Urú** as a process is much more limited in scope than séimhiú with regard to the number of environments in which its use is obligatory. It is used extensively within the verbal system and must apply (a) after such question markers as **An?** '?', **Cá?** 'Where?' and **Nach?** the negative question marker, (b) after the complementisers **Go/Nach** 'that/that not', (c) in indirect relative clauses following the relative marker **A** 'whom, that'. The process is also obligatory after the possessive markers **Ár** 'Our', **Bhur** 'your (Pl.)' and **A** 'their', and is the common rule in two of the main dialects following a preposition which is accompanied by the definite article.

From the available data, it would seem that we can isolate three different stages in the acquisition of **Urú**. These different stages can be observed most clearly within the development of the verbal system, and the part played by the morphophonemic changes referred to as **Urú**, in that development. The three stages of acquisition can be characterised as follows.

Period 1: The initial consonant of the basic stem is left unchanged although preceded by elements that in adult speech must be accompanied by **Urú**. It should also be pointed out, that although **Urú** is missing, appropriate tense markers are used with all verbs.

An fuair tú Fionnuala?	[ə fuəˠ ʈu·]	'Did you get Fionnuala
An cuirfidh muid uisce ann?	[ə köʰɾ mödj]	'Will we put water in it?'
An fágfaidh mé oscailte é?	[əfˇa:ki·]	'Will I leave it open?'

Period 2: During this period a second strategy is introduced, namely, the use of **séimhiú** rather than **urú**. However, the previous strategy was not abandoned totally and the two strategies are used side by side.

An fheiceann tú an milseán?	[ən ˈecən̪ t̪ʰuˑ]	'Do you see thesweet?'
Cá bheidh sé ag gabháil?	[kʰaː veˑi ʃ eˑ]	'Where will he be going?'
Fan go ólfaidh mé é.	[fˠan gə ˠlʲi mjeː eˑ]	'Wait until I (will) drink it'

In the standard written language **Urú** is shown (a) by placing **'n'** before vowels and (b) by placing the letter symbol for the newly derived consonant in front of the basic consonant of the stem/root. Thus, adhering for the moment to the above examples (a) **ólfaidh mé** becomes **go n-ólfaidh mé** and (b) **feiceann** and **beidh** become **An bhfeiceann?** and **Cá mbeidh?**, respectively.

Using phonemic transcription and bearing in mind the registers to which the children were being exposed, the phrases involved can be represented as follows:

An bhfeiceann tú?	/ə vjecəŋ̪ t̪ʰuː/
Cá mbeidh sé?	/kʰaː mjeː ʃeˑ/
Fan go n-ólfaidh mé é	/fan gə nˠlʲi mjeˑeˑ/

Conclusion

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper my objective was to outline some of the 'possible developmental stages' in the acquisition of the Irish phonological system and Initial Mutations. The use of the word 'possible' has been deliberate and understandably so, since the children whose speech we have been describing acquired Irish in a non-Gaeltacht setting and in an environment where they were being gradually and continually exposed to English outside of the family home. While the patterns described in the preceding pages may not deviate in any major way from those found in the speech of children brought up with Irish as the first language in the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking areas), nevertheless, because of the dearth of published studies relating to the acquisition of the palatalised/velarised contrast in the Irish consonantal system, one must not come to any firm conclusions until more expansive and conclusive data has been forthcoming. I would hope, however, that what I have outlined in this paper will form a basis for comparison as soon as new and perhaps more variable data becomes available.

New data on the use of initial mutations should be more accessible since these processes are somewhat delayed and seem to emerge from the 'two word stage' onwards. The use of mutations is a morphophonemic process and consequently carries a low semantic load vis-a-vis the contrast within the consonant system or the rich morphological patterns in the Irish verbal system. Nevertheless, it is worthy of detailed study in order to clarify its overall role within the linguistic system of Irish, and perhaps more importantly, to show to what extent effective communication is prohibited by having such processes suppressed or considerably reduced in scope. The results presented here should be of considerable interest to all those involved in the teaching and learning of Irish as a second language, and perhaps also to a small but growing number of linguists interested in the development of linguistic theory and Universal Grammar. Let us hope, therefore, that what has been reported here will have aroused their interest and curiosity.

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LÁN BÉIL

Diarmuid Ó Donnchadha
Acadamh Teanga Éireann

Nuair a bhí mo mhac sé bliana d'aois chroch mé miocrafón thar a mhuineál agus lean mé timpeall ó mhaidin go hoíche é le téipthaifeadán. Bhailigh mé breis is daichead míle focal cainte uaidh laistigh de mhí. Chaill mé beagán dá chuid cainte i gcaitheamh an ama seo - bhí orm téipeanna a mhalartú - chuir gleo seachtrach isteach ar an taifeadadh agus níorbh fhéidir an chaint a dhéanamh amach, theip an taifeadán agus mar sin de.

Tá sé i gceist agam anseo cur síos áirithe a dhéanamh ar an gcéad míle focal Gaeilge agus ar an gcéad míle focal Béarla as an gcnuasach. Sula ndéanfaidh mé é sin, áfach, b'fhéidir nár mhiste cúpla rud nó trí a rá faoin timpeallacht teanga inar mhair an leanbh féin.

Ní mór a rá chomh maith nach leanbh é níos mó.

Sa chéad áit, ba é an duine ba shine de thriúr clainne é. Bhí a dhearthair bliain go leith níos óige ná é. Bhí a dheirfiúr ina leanbh baclainne gan de chaint aici ach plubaireacht. Gaeilge a labhair mé féin agus mo bhean chéile. Ba bhéas linn ón gcéad lá gan ach Gaeilge a labhairt leis na páistí gan beann ar an gcomhluadar ina mbeimis.

Bhí sé ag freastal ar scoil lánGhaeilge. Bhí caighdeán maith Gaeilge ag na múinteoirí sa scoil, ach, chomh fada le m'eolas ba é féin an t-aon leanbh amháin sa scoil a bhí á thógáil le Gaeilge.

Lasmuigh den scoil ní raibh de theagmháil aige le cainteoirí Gaeilge ach uncail leis a raibh Gaeilge réasúnta maith aige, corr dhuine a thiocfadh chun an tí, agus an rud ba mhó ar fad, an tamall a chaithfimis sa Ghaeltacht i rith an tsamhraidh. Is ceart a rá nach raibh sé sa Ghaeltacht le bliain sular deineadh an bailiúchán. Ní raibh cónaí orainn i gceantar na scoile rud a d'fhág gur le páistí a bhí ar scoileanna Béarla a bhíodh teagmháil aige lasmuigh dá shaol scoile. Bhí dúil sa cheol aige agus bhíodh téipthaifeadán ar a raibh cuid mhaith seanamhrán ar siúl go minic aige.

Féachfam mar sin ar an gcnuasach.

Dúirt sé cúpla amhrán nó trí i gcaitheamh an ama go raibh an cnuasach á dhéanamh. Ceann ar an sean nós agus ceann scoile. Níl focail na n-amhrán san áireamh sna liostaí i mo dhiaidh anseo. Seo iad an chéad míle focal Gaeilge as an gcnuasach maraon leis an mhinicíocht lenar úsáid sé iad.

MÓRLIOSTA

8	*-sa,*	liomsa (2), ortsa (3), agamsa, domsa (2).
4	*-se*	chuirfinnse, duitse, uaitse, táimse.
35	AINM	
14	*a*	réamhfhocal
2	*a*	mír uimhir.
4	*a*	a bhí
	a	a fhios
	a	a dúirt sé
	a	an uair a dúirt
3	*a*	mír choibh.
5	*á!*	
2	*á*	= ag+a
6		abair
		ábalta
7	*ach*	
2	*aer*	
6	*ag*	ag dul(2), ag titim, ag éirí
5	*againn*	
7	*agam*	bí .. agam(6), an x agam féin
3	*agat*	
22	*agus*	
2	*aici*	
2	*alright*	
2	*amach*	
	amárach	
3	*amháin*	
2	*amhrán*	
2	*amuigh*	
53	*an*	alt
9	*an*	(?). an ea(2), an dtuigeann tú(2)
15	*ann*	
12	*anois*	
6	*ansan*	
6	*anseo*	
2	*ansin*	
	anso	
4	*anuraidh*	
	aois	
9	*aon*	ar aon chuma (1)
22	*ar*	ábalta ar, ar oscailt, ar fad (2), ar aon chuma, ar dtúis
2	*b'*	b'fhearr liom
	ba	ba mhaith liom
2	*bacaint*	
	bán	
	beag	
8	*bearbóir*	
2	*beirt*	
	bhuel	
113	*bí*	
	bliain	
4	*bosca*	
3	*briste*	briste suas
2	*buaigh*	
	buidéal	
	bun	
	by golly!	
2	*cá*	
3	*cad*	
	caillín	
	caith	caithfimid x a dhéanamh
	caitheamh	
	canadh	
	carbhat	
	cathair	
	cé acu	
18	*ceann*	
2	*ceap*	
	ceithre	
2	*chuig*	
7	*chun*	
	clor	
	clal	

	clois	
2	*cnó*	miotal
5	*coimeád*	
	cónaí	i gcónaí
12	*conas*	
	cuimhnigh	
4	*cuir*	
2	*cuma*	ar aon chuma (2)
4	*d'*	d'ithe, d'aois, d'oscailt, d'fháil
2	*dá*	an dá
2	*de*	
5	*déan*	
2	*déanamh*	é a dhéanamh
	dearmad	
8	*dhá*	dhá cheann etc (8)
5	*díobh*	
	díom	
2	*díreach*	
	do	= le haghaidh, = a (a choimeád) 2, do (ghearr etc)x.
2	*dó*	= 2
	dócha	
2	*dom*	
4	*doras*	
3	*dtí*	go dtí
2	*duine*	
	duit	
5	*dul*	
	dúnta	
19	*é*	
2	*éigin*	
12	*eile*	
2	*éirí*	ag éirí te
	eitil:	
4	*fad*	ar fad (4)
	fada	
6	*faigh*	
	fáil	
5	*falla*	
	fan	
2	*féach!*	
4	*féad*	
	fearr	b'fhearr liom
2	*feic*	
2	*féidir*	
4	*féin*	
2	*flakes*	= calóga arbhair
	fós	
2	*fuar*	
3	*fuinneog*	
2	*gach*	
	gan	
	garsún	
	geansaí	
	gearr	
9	*go*	go dtí go (1), go bhfuil (2), go maith, go léir go gcuimhneoidh
3	*gruaig*	
	gur	
4	*guthán*	(páirt den taifeadán)
3	*i*	i gcónaí(1)
	iad	
	iall	
	in airde	
2	*ina*	ina stop
26	*is*	is ea (13), ní hea (3), is é (2), nach ea (3).
5	*isteach*	
3	*istigh*	
3	*ith*	
3	*ithe*	
	jab	
	lámh	
3	*lán*	
3	*le*	
	leat	
4	*leis*	= freisin
	liath	
	linn	
2	*liom*	ba mhaith liom (1)
2	*liosta*	
2	*lorg*	
2	*maith*	ba mhaith liom

8	*mar*	
	marla	
8	*mé*	
4	*méid*	
6	*mise*	
3	*mo*	
6	*mór*	níos mó (3)
	mórán	
	muinchille	
	múinteoir	
4	*na*	
2	*ná*	
4	*ná*	= nach
	nach	
15	*ní*	mír bhriathartha
2	*níor*	
3	*níos*	níos mó (3)
2	*nó!*	
2	*nó*	
2	*nua*	
	nuair	
3	*ó!*	
	ó	
4	*oíche*	
	oifig	
3	*ort*	
	orthu	
2	*oscail*	
2	*oscailt*	ar oscailt
4	*oíche*	
2	*pacsaí*	= plaisteach
	páiste	
5	*pláta*	
	pleidhce	
5	*pláta*	
	páiste	
2	*rang*	
2	*ruibéar*	
3	*ró-*	
3	*sa*	
2	*saghas*	
2	*san*	(= ins an (1))
2	*scól*	(loisceadh le huisce)
5	*scriú*	
19	*sé*	
5	*sean*	
3	*seilmide*	
2	*seo*	
	seomra	
	sí	
24	*sin*	
2	*sin*	mír threise
2	*síos*	
2	*siúd*	
	siúl	
	stán	
3	*stop*	
	stuif	
4	*suas*	briste suas (1)
2	*síos*	
	tabhair	
	tabhairt	
4	*taifeadán*	
3	*taobh*	taobh thiar (1)
	tar éis	
2	*te*	
4	*teastaigh*	
6	*téigh*	
3	*thall*	
	thiar	taobh thiar
3	*thíos*	
	tig	= teach
2	*timpeall*	
	titim	
3	*tóg*	
3	*tógaint*	
4	*trí*	= 3
	triúr	
2	*trom*	
20	*tú*	
3	*tuig*	an dtuigeann tú (3)
	tuilleadh	a thuilleadh
3	*uaim*	
	uair	
2	*uait*	
	uirthi	

urlár

6 *X* = ainmneacha tráchtála

Sa mhíle agus seacht bhfocal déag de chaint reatha bhain sé feidhm as 241 focal éagsúil. Is ionann é sin agus 23.7% den 1017. Bhain sé feidhm as ainmneacha dílse 35 uaire. Bhain sé feidhm as ainmneacha tráchtála 6 huaire. Áirím an dá ghrúpa seo mar aon fhocal amháin i ngach cás. Bhain sé feidhm go minic as an mír "Do" le briathra sa táscach caite. Os rud é gur rud roghnach é áirím anseo é mar aon fhocal amháin. Bhain sé feidhm as an mír threise "-sa" 8 n-uaire. Ní áirím mar fhocal ar leith é seo.

Sa chéad áit anseo thuas tá na foirmeacha treise "-sa" agus "-se" ar bharr an liosta. Ní gá dom aon tagairt a dhéanamh dá n-úsáid sin. I gcásanna eile luaim foirmeacha gramadaí le rudaí. Téarmaí agus deifnídí de réir na gramadaí traidisiúnta atá i gceist anseo. Ní aontaím ar fad leis na deifnídí sin, ach measaim gurbh fhearr cloí leo ar an ócáid seo ar eagla miniú na téarmaíochta a bheith ina thráchtas níos mó ná an chuid eile den pháipéar seo. Mar gheall ar m'easpa muiníne as na téarmaí, áfach, tá solaoidí den úsáid agus miniciocht na húsáide sin tugtha agam i gcásanna áirithe.

Tá dornán beag focal sa sliocht gur fiú aird a dhíriú orthu. Is iad seo iad:

1. By golly!

Bhí an rá seo go minic i mbéal duine de na cainteoirí Gaeilge a raibh cleachtadh aige orthu.

2. flakes.

Bhí an focal "calóga" aige ag an am.

3. No!

Focal ón mBéarla é seo chomh maith. Tá an focal seo ina bhéal inniu féin.

4. pacsaí.

Focal teaghlaigh é seo. É féin a "cheap" an focal agus é ag iarraidh "plaisteach" a rá. Neadaigh an focal i gceint an tí.
Seo é *"Liosta Miniciochta na nIfhocal is Coitianta"* ag Ó Huallacháin (Buntús Gaeilge, 1966). Naoi bhfocal is nócha atá sa liosta sin.

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bí		ach	Q	mo		áit	
an	C	aon		well		muise	
is	B	ann		tabhair		ceann	
sé		a	F	amach		í	
a	Q	a	M	acu		faoi	
ar		maith		is	Q	teach	
ag		anois		air		gach	
agus		fios		rud		aige	
é		tar		cad		eile	
ní		le		nuair		ó	
i		féin		sin	S	liom	
go		go		mór		mar	
mé		feic		iad		de	
tú		cé		caith		fear	
ó		agat		do	M	nach	
abair		sin		leis	R	beag	
na		sa		nach		seo	
déan		faigh		lá		as	
ea		bith		mise		dá	M
sin	C	cuir		dóigh		éigin	
téigh		duine		muid		cuid	
sí		ansin		nó		ach	R
siad		agam		isteach		oíche	
a	R	an		gabh		do	R
mar		níl		á	U	chomh	

B = briathar, C = cáilitheach, F = forainmneach, M = mír, Q = cónasc/ceist, R = réamhfhoclach, S = taispeántach, U = intriacht

Ag cur san áireamh gur bunaíodh liosta Uí Uallacháin ar chnuasach a bhí céad uair níos mó ná an ceann atá faoi chaibidil againsa is iontach an rud é a oiread sin a bheith acu i bpáirt lena chéile. Féach, cuir i gcás na focail is minice úsáide sa dá liosta. Tá seacht gcinn as an gcéad deich mar a chéile. Níl ach dornán focal ar liosta Uí Uallacháin nach bhfuil ar mo liostasa, mar atá *siad, tar* (briathar), *bith, acu, air, rud, lá, dóigh, muid, nó, gabh, áit, muise, l, faoi, aige, fear, as, dá, éigin, cuid, chomh.* Ní raibh "muid" sa chanúint a bhí ag an leanbh. Tharla na focail eile go léir i gcuid eile den chnuasach.

Fuair Ó Huallacháin (op cit) 3,500 focal éagsúil i 100,000 focal reatha. Tá 241 focal éagsúil sa mhíle focal atá os ár gcomhair inniu. Deimhníonn na figiúirí seo an tsoiléirse a dhearbhaíonn an ní a bhí i gceist ag Ó Huallacháin nuair a dúirt sé agus é ag tagairt dá liosta miniciochta (op cit lch 51),

"Dá fhaid síos a théitear ar an liosta is ea is mó an uimhir fhocal a gcaitear máistreacht a fháil orthu leis an gcéatadán breise céanna aitheantais a bhaint amach."

Maidir le líon focal, ach go háirithe, níl aon cheist ach gurb i dtosach an tsealbhaithe is ea is líonmhaire líon na bhfocal a sealbhaítear.

AINMFHOCAIL

163 ainmfhocal atá sa sliocht. Seasca a trí focal éagsúil a bhí ann.

B'fhéidir iad a rangú mar a leanas:

1. Ainm dílis : 35; Gairmeach 20; Ainmneach 15.
2. Ainm coitianta : 128; - Ainmneach uatha 116; Tabharthach uatha 2; Ainmneach iolra 10 (Uimhreacha le 5).

Is iad seo na hainmfhocail sin:

35	*Ainm*		2	*fios*	
	amhrán			*flakes*	
3	*bearbóir*		3	*fuinneog*	
	bliain			*garsún*	
4	*bosca*			*geansaí*	
	buidéal		3	*gruaig*	
	bun			*guthán*	páirt den taifeadán
	cailín			*iall*	
	caitheamh			*ithe*	
	carbhat			*jab*	
	cathair			*lámh*	
18	*ceann*	(B'fhéidir nár chóir an focal seo a bheith anseo)	2	*liosta*	
				lorg	
2	*cnó*	miotal	2	*maith*	
	clor			*márla*	
	clai			*muinchille*	
	cónaí	i gcónaí		*múinteoir*	
2	*cuma*	ar aon chuma		*oifig*	
	dearmad			*oscailt*	
4	*doras*			*oíche*	
2	*duine*		2	*pacsaí*	= plaisteach
	déanamh			*páiste*	
	éirí			*pleidhce*	
	eitilt		5	*pláta*	
	falla		2	*rang*	
	fáil		2	*ruibéar*	
				saghas	

5	*scriú*	4	*taifeadán*
3	*seilmide*		*taobh*
	seomra		*tig* teach
	simné		*titim*
	siúl		*tuilleadh* a thuilleadh
	stáin	3	*tógaint*
	stuif		*urlár*

6 *ainmneacha tráchtála*

D'usáid sé an focal guthán i leaba miocrafón. É féin a thug sin air an chéad uair a chonaic sé ceann. Mura gcuirtear ainmneacha tráchtála agus ainmneacha dílse san áireamh is fíor a rá nár úsáid sé aon ainmfhocal eile Béarla i sliocht na Gaeilge. Tá difríochtaí móra idir an liosta seo d'ainmfhocail agus a miníochtaí agus an liosta d'fhocail ainmfhoclacha ag Ó Huallacháin. Is é is dóichí gur mar sin atá toisc ócáidí cainte an linbh a bheith teoranta.

Ní deirtear linn cad iad na hábhair a bhí faoi chaibidil ag pobal Uí Uallacháin. Labhair an leanbh faoi nithe a bhain le *(1) an bearbóir, (2) an taifeadán, (3) triomú a chuid gruaige, (4) seilmide, (5) an rang nua, (6) éan a thit de dhíon an tí, (7) troid lena dheartháir, (8) an teach, (9) an leanbh óg, (10) ruibéar leis féin, (11) oscailt an dorais, (12) ithe, (13) dul isteach sa chathair, (14) nithe a cheannach, (15) a mhuinchilli, (16) uisce te (á ní féin).*

Le daoine fásta ar fad a bhí sé ag caint. Labhair sé faoina dheartháir agus faoina dheirfiúr ach níor labhair sé leo ach sa mhéid go ndúirt sé leis an leanbh óg a béal d'éisteacht agus go ndúirt sé lena dheartháir gur bhuaigh sé air.

NA BRIATHRA

Aon chéad agus sé bhriathar déag, sé fhocal is fiche éagsúil, a bhí sa sliocht. Tá deacracht agam le deifnídí Uí Uallacháin, ach, má ghlactar lena bhfuil aige tá cúig cinn déag den chéad sé bhriathar is fiche mar a chéile leis na briathra atá sa sliocht agamsa. Toisc cnuasach Uí Uallacháin a bheith níos mó agus níos fairsinge tá níos mó aimsirí agus pearsan i gceist aige ná mar atá sa sliocht atá i gceist agamsa.

Measaim nach bhfuil aon amhras ann ach gurb iad na briathra is túisce a léirítear sna liostaí seo na briathra is túisce a sealbhaítear sa ghnáthshaol lasmuigh den seomra ranga. Is iad seo a leanas na briathra a bhí i bpáirt ag an dá liosta: *bí, is, abair, déan, téigh, cuir, faigh, feic, tabhair, caith, ith, tuig, fëach, ceap.* Áiríonn Ó Huallacháin

"Tá fhios (ag)" ina bhriathar ar leith. Tá an rá seo sa dá shliocht.

CÁILITHIGH

"Focail cháilitheacha" atá ag Ó Huallacháin ar "aidiachtaí, dobhriathra agus corrfhocal eile". Aontaím leis cuid mhaith sa mhéid sin, ach ní ghéillim ar fad ar fad dó. Fágann sin gur deacair dom comparáid a dhéanamh idir na cáilithigh aige sin agus na cáilithigh agam féin. B'fhéidir gur leor a lua ar an ócáid seo go bhfuil an chuma ar an scéal go bhfuil gaol mar a chéile idir an dá liosta agus atá idir dhá liosta na mbriathra.

Sula bhfágfam na focail is dócha gur chóir féachaint ar mhórliosta na bhfocal a tharla sa sliocht Béarla. Míle agus seacht bhfocal is fiche a bhí sa sliocht Béarla. Dhá chéad agus ceithre fhocal is fiche éagsúil a bhí sa mhéid sin. Sa liosta i mo dhiaidh anseo tá foirmeacha éagsúla d'fhocail áirithe curtha síos faoi mar gur focail éagsúla iad. Dheineadh é sin nuair ba dhócha nár aithin an leanbh mar aon fhocal amháin iad.

33	AINM	4	come	3	heavy		name
	English	15	could	2	here	13	no
3	Heigh		couple		high	6	nothing
3	Hello		cream	12	him	14	now
72	I		cut		his	11	of
15	a		cutting		hold	9	off
2	able	2	did	2	home	4	oh
2	after	3	didn't		house	15	on
	ah!		dirty		how	2	one
6	all	6	do		hurt	10	only
16	am I'm (15)		dog		ice-pop		other
3	an	3	doing	7	if		our
19	and	4	done	9	in	5	out
3	any	8	down	4	into	5	over
4	anyplace		egg	25	is (that's etc.)		
6	are we're (5)	2	even	2	isn't		phone
	around		every	41	it	2	piece
2	asked		everything	5	job		pinnar
2	at		father	9	jump	4	place
2	away		fight		just		puppy
	awful		fighting	3	keep	4	pushed
3	back	2	finished	5	know	5	put
4	bang	5	for		leave		putting
5	be		four		left		right
	because	4	get	5	like		run
	beat		getting		listen		said
	bed	4	give	2	look	3	same
	best	2	go		machine		say
2	big	11	going		make		school
	bit		good		making		seat
4	bold	3	got	6	me		sense
	boy	9	grass		might		shovel
	break	3	ha?		mightn't	3	side
	bringing	5	hammer		mine		singing
2	but	2	hammering	3	more	2	sit
	by golly	5	hand		mother		some
2	can	2	has		much		something
15	can't		hate	2	must		sometimes
2	car		hated		mustn't		start
2	cause	19	have	6	my	2	stay
	climb	17	he	2	myself	3	stone
2	cold	6	hear	4	nails		stop

3	straighten		wait
	sure		walk
2	take	7	wall
5	taperecorder	3	want
	tea	6	was
	television	15	we
30	that		well!
29	the	2	went
	the'll (there will)	5	what
3	them		when
	then		where
16	there		while
6	thing	6	will (I'll etc.)
	three		window
2	throw	5	with
2	tidn't		without
3	timber		word
	times		working
4	tipped	10	would (t'would, I'd etc.)
3	tis	2	wouldn't
	tisn't	2	yard
24	to		ye
	too	4	yeh
6	top		yesterday
3	touch	39	you
2	trying	2	your
6	two		
8	up		
2	us		
4	very		

Tá téarmaíocht ghramadaí luaite agam roinnt uaireanta cheana féin. Dá olcas staid na téarmaíochta i nGaeilge is measa fós an scéal i gcás an Bhéarla. Anuas ar sin, is teangacha de chineálacha éagsúla iad Gaeilge agus Béarla. Ní fheicim gur fiú mórán é iarracht a thabhairt ar chomparáid a dhéanamh idir bhriathra agus a bhfoirmeacha ná ainmfhocail agus aidiachtaí agus a bhfoirmeacha sa dá theanga. Tugaim liosta na mbriathra Béarla i mo dhiaidh anseo áfach, ach, níl sé i gceist agam aon scagadh a dhéanamh orthu. Ina theannta sin ar na cúiseanna atá díreach luaite agam, ní luaim, cuir i gcás, aimsir ná pearsa ná eile leo.

BRIATHRA

ask, bang, be, beat, break, bring, can, climb, come, cut, do, fight, finish, get, give, go, hammer, hate, have, hear, hold, hurt, jump, keep, know, leave, like, listen, look, make, must, push, put, run, say, sing, sit, stay, stop, straighten, take, throw, tip, touch, try, wait, walk, want, will, work.

Le daoine óga is mó a labhair an leanbh Béarla sa sliocht atá faoi chaibidil againn anseo. Labhair sé faoi nithe a bhain le *(1) an ní a bhí á dhéanamh aige le linn na cainte (Dhein sé é seo roinnt uaireanta), (2) Bheannaigh do dhaoine, (3) féar a bhaint, (4) an taifeadán, (5) sluasaid, (6) ainm a mhúinteora (le duine fásta é seo), (7) cairde óga (ceist ó dhuine fásta a spreag seo), (8) gearán faoina dhearthár (le duine fásta), (9) uachtar reoite, (10) dul abhaile, (11) cá raibh sé, (12) súgradh - I could jump off etc., (13) cá raibh sé ag dul, (14) iarraidh ar dhuine dul ina theannta, (15) treoir oibre do pháiste eile, (16) a mhadra.*

NA STRUCHTÚIR

Níl córas rianaithe na struchtúr ag Ó Huallacháin éifeachtach ar mhórán cúiseanna. Ní mian liom dul isteach sa scéal sin ar an ócáid seo, ach, ní mór a lua, mar shampla, gur féidir gur mar a chéile cuid de na struchtúir a áirítear aige mar struchtúir éagsúla, agus gur struchtúir ghaolmhara cuid eile acu. Sa chóras a úsáidimse glactar leis gurb í an abairt ráiteasach dhearfach is bunabairt i gcónaí. Abairt chlaochlaithe, abairt chomhnasctha nó abairt neadaithe is ea gach abairt eile. Ar ndóigh, is iomaí duine a ghlacann leis, abair, go bhfuil foirmeacha difriúla ag ainmfhocail de réir a bhfeidhm agus a n-ionaid san abairt; a admhaíonn gurb aon bhriathar amháin gach aon cheann de na briathra rialta agus neamhrialta ainneoin a n-infhillte agus a bhfoirmeacha difriúla, ach ag an am gcéanna a áiteodh ar an saol gur chóir struchtúir a rangú faoi cheannteidil dhifriúla nuair is abairtí claochlaithe, abairtí cónasctha nó abairtí neadaithe iad.

Chun go leanfaí an cur síos i mo dhiaidh anseo thíos is ea a thugaim na samplaí agus an míniúchán a leanann iad. Ní miste a lua chomh maith go bhfuil breac-chur síos déanta agam ar an gcóras i Seaibhú Teanga agus Múineadh na Gaeilge, Cló Cois Fharraige. Chomh maith leis sin tá cur síos níos iomláine agam ar na nithe seo i saothar atá leis na foilsitheoirí le tamall anuas.

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Abairt ráiteasach dhearfach

Tá dhá chuid san abairt ráiteasach dhearfach, mar atá Frása Tosaigh agus Frása Comhlántach. Tugaimis FT agus FC orthu faoi seach. Freagraíonn an dá chineál seo don roinnt a dhéanfadh duine go hiomasach ar rá chun teacht ar a chomhdhéantasaigh.

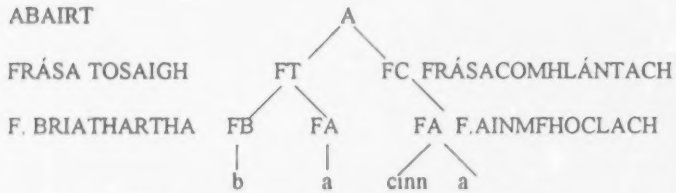
Sampla 1: *Cheannaigh Seán an nuachtán.*

FT Cheannaigh Seán
FC an nuachtán

Ní dócha go scagfadh duine ar bith an rá seo i slí ar bith eile. Mar *''Cheannaigh/Seán an nuachtán,''* nó mar *''Cheannaigh Seán an/ nuachtán''* cuir i gcás.

Tá dhá chuid san FT mar atá Frása Briathartha agus Frása Ainmfhoclach. Tugaimis FB agus FA orthu. Frása Ainmfhoclach atá san FC.

Má ghlactar le A mar abairt is féidir an abairt ráiteasach dhearfach seo a leagan amach ina binnléaráid mar seo:



Sna samplaí seo b = *briathar*, a = *ainmfhocal*, r = *réamhfhocal*, cinn = *cinntitheach*.
Eolas faoi aimsirí, pearsain etc. ar an leibhéal seo.

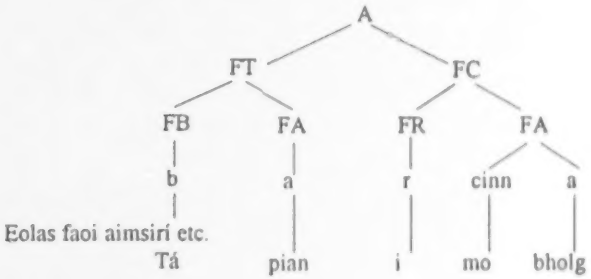
Claochlú ar an abairt *''Cheannaigh Seán nuachtán''* is ea

Seán a cheannaigh an nuachtán
An nuachtán a cheannaigh Seán
Ar cheannaigh Seán an nuachtán?
Cé a cheannaigh an nuachtán?

Sampla 2: *Tá pian i mo bholg.*

FT Tá pian
FC i mo bholg

Frása Réamhfhoclach atá san FC san abairt seo. Tugaimis FR ar a leithéid sin. Mar seo a bheadh an bhinnléaráid:



Abairt chlaochlaithe

Abairt ráiteasach dhearfach is ea an rá: Chonaic mé solas ann.
Claochluithe treise is ea na ráite
Solas a chonaic mé ann.
Mise a chonaic solas ann.
*(Is)** ann a chonaic mé solas.*

**Táim in amhras gur ceart an focal ''is'' a rangú mar bhriathar.

Abairt chónasctha

Tháinig sé isteach agus dhún sé an doras.

Tá dhá abairt ráiteasach dhearfach sa rá seo agus iad nasctha leis an bhfocal ''agus.'' Cuirtear an rá seo i bhfrithshuíomh le:
Dhún sé an doras nuair a tháinig sé isteach.

Tá feidhm threisithe le hord na gcomhdhéantasach sa rá seo agus, ar ndóigh, tá a éifeacht féin ag an bhfocal *''nuair''* ar chiall na cainte.

Abairt neadaithe

Cheannaigh sé nuachtán agus leabhar.

B'fhéidir ''comhdhéantasach ceannasach'' a thabhairt ar *''Cheannaigh sé nuachtán''* sa rá seo. Tá ''abairt chuaiche'' nó ''comhdhéantasach cuaiche'' ar an

dara ceann. B'fhéidir a rá go raibh an dá abairt, *Cheannaigh sé nuachtán* agus *Cheannaigh sé leabhar*, i gceist. Roghnaigh an cainteoir an chéad cheann mar chomhdhéantasach ceannasach. Neadaíodh an ceann eile isteach sa cheann sin agus mar chuid den neadú sin deineadh fochaisiú ar chuid den chomhdhéantasach cuaiche.

NA STRUCHTÚIR

Féachfam mar sin ar na struchtúir a tharla sa sliocht atá faoi iniúchadh againn. Tosóimid leis na ceisteanna. Tharla a laghad sin ceisteanna sa mhíle focal gur fearr iad a thabhairt Seachas bheith ag déanamh cur síos orthu. Is iad seo iad:

Ná raibh? (= Nach raibh).
Nach raibh?
Ná rabhamar? (= Nach rabhamar).
Ná bíonn? (= Nach mbíonn)
Nach ea?
Nach bhfuil?
An ea?
An dtuigeann tú?
An bhfuil a fhios agat?
An dtéann sé timpeall...?
An X é sin?
Cad eile? (x3)
Conas atá tú? (x10) (Athrá mar mhagadh a bhí anseo).
Cá bhfuil tú? San oifig an ea? (Lean an dá rud seo a chéile. Ní bhfuair sé freagra ar an gcéad cheist).
Agus cad é seo? Agus é seo? (Lean an dá cheist a chéile. Freagraíodh an chéad cheann).
Le cé acu múinteoir?

Abairtí ráiteasacha dearfacha

D'úsáid sé dhá cheann is nócha de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí cónasctha

D'úsáid sé naoi gcinn de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí cónasctha

D'úsáid sé naoi gcinn de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí claochlaithe

D'úsáid sé sé cinn de na habairtí seo.

Ba léir straitéis thógála ar dheich gcinn de ráite aige.

BRATHAITHE

Brathal is ea rá nach bhfuil iomlán ann féin ach atá ag brath ar nithe eile, go háirithe an chaint a chuaigh díreach roimhe chun a bhrí a léiriú.

D'úsáid sé rá is nócha a bhí ina mbrathaithe. Ba fhreagraí cuid acu agus iad ag brath ar cheisteanna chun a gciall a chur in iúl. Bhí cuid eile acu ag brath ar chomhthéacs na cainte chun céille.

Léirigh sé straitéisí agus patrúin áirithe i gcásanna.
Féachfam iad seo:

1. (a) *... go dtí an seanbhearbóir mé.*
   (b) *go dtí an seanbhearbóir mé amárach.*
   (c) i *Teastaíonn uaim dul ann mar*
   ii *go bhfuil mo ghruaig fada agus*
   iii *teastaíonn uaitse dul ann leis mar.*

2. (a) *Bhí seanbhearbóir agatsa anuraidh.*
   (b) *An seanbhearbóir a bhí agatsa anuraidh.*

3. (a) *Tá doras ar an taobh seo.*
   (b) *an taobh seo agus*
   (c) *díreach isteach ansan ansin.*

Plé

Ag 1. (b) chuir sé an focal *amárach* leis an rá ag 1. (a). Níor dhein sé athrá ach ar an méid sin den abairt. Dhein sé a leithéid céanna roinnt uaireanta sa sliocht.

Tar éis dó patrún áirithe a leanúint ag 1. (c) chaith sé uaidh é ag 1. (c) iii.
Bhí 2. (a) mar a bheadh athrá ar an rud a bhí i gceist aige ina dhioscúrsa. Dhein sé mar a bheadh ceannteideal de leis an gcaochlú a dhein sé air ag 2.
(b). Ba dhóigh leis go raibh siopa an bhearbóra tugtha i láthair aige leis an méid sin. Cur síos ar teagan amach an tsiopa is ea 3. (a). Ceartú ar an gcur síos is ea 3. (b). Tugtar faoi deara anseo chomh maith nár dhein sé athrá ar an rá iomlán.

Ag 3. (c) tagraíonn *''ansan''* do shuíomh an dorais agus *''ansin''* d'am.
Ní léir go ndearna sé aon idirdhealú idir an bearbóir féin agus siopa an bhearbóra.

4. (a) i *Chuamar chuige anuraidh.*
ii *Chuamar chuige anuraidh* *agus*
iii *ghearr sé mo ghruaig*
agus gruaig R.

Plé

Sampla eile é seo den athrá móide mír bhreise eolais. Sa chás seo tá tairiscint iomlán sa mhír bhreise. Is ionann í agus abairt neadaithe den chineál atá luaite agam cheana féin anseo thuas.

Is cosúil nach raibh an focal *''bearr''* aige agus má chuala sé sa chomhrá áirithe seo é níor thug sé comhartha ar bith go raibh éifeacht aige sin air.

Ní raibh an nath *''cuid gruaige''* aige ach chomh beag. Baineann an tagairt chéanna do seo agus atá díreach déanta do *''ghearr''*.

5. a) *Ní choimeádfad.*
b) *Ní choimeádfaidh mé.*

Plé

Níl aon cheist orm ach gur chun treise athrá sa chás seo. Is léir go bhfuil an tairiscint chéanna sa dá rá. Níl a fhios agam cad cuige an t-athrú foirme. B'fhéidir gur tástáil é seo féachaint an raibh feidhm threise lena leithéid.

6. a) *Aer fuar anois.*
b) *Aer fuar anois.*

Plé

Chun treise an t-athrá. Bhí a chuid gruaige á troimiú le linn an ama agus bhí an gléas éirithe róthe. Is suimiúil an rud é nár bhac sé le briathar a chur sa rá.

7. *a)* *Thall ar an bhfuinneog.*
b) *ar an stán.*

Ag tagairt do bhréagán a bhí ar leac na fuinneoige a bhí sé ag 7. a). Nuair nach raibh an té a chuaigh chun na fuinneoige ag teacht ar an mbréagán is ea a chuir sé 7. b) leis.

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Is cosúil go raibh sé ag géilleadh do riail phragmatach na cainte a éilíonn go dtabharfaí leoreolas, rud nach ionann agus eolas gan ghá, don éisteoir.

8. a) *D'iosfainn níos mó ná an méid sin, X.*
   b) i *D'iosfainn dhá phláta*
      ii *D'ósfainn dhá phláta díobh*
      iii *dhá phláta lán de flakes*
      iv *dhá phláta díobh.*

Tharla caint ar ábhar eile ag an bpointe sin agus ansan

8. c) *Níl ann ach amháin go bhféadfainn níos mó ná an méid a thógas d'ithe.*
   d) *Is ea.*
   e) *D'fhéadfainn níos mó ná an méid a bhí ann d'ithe.*

9. i *Tá mé chun*
   ii *chun bosca*
   iii *an bosca*
   iv *an seanbhosca a thógaint linn chun go gcuimhneoidh mé orthu.*

Plé

Is léir gur tógáil atá ar bun ag 8 agus 9. Ag féachaint ar na solaoidí seo agus ag cur miniciocht úsáide na gcineálacha éagsúla struchtúr san áireamh, d'fhéadfaí a cheapadh gur léiriú atá ann ar an gcéim foghlama a ghlacann an duine ag dul ó abairtí ráiteasacha dearfacha dó go ráite claochlaithe agus go ráite neadaithe. Tugtar faoi deara freisin go bhfuil sé ag cur le líon na dtairiscintí sna ráite.

Tá "dearmad" in 8 c). Ní bheadh an focal *"amháin"* anseo ag cainteoir fásta. Creidim go raibh an rá *"ach amháin"* nua- fhoghlamtha aige ag an tráth áirithe seo. Ní raibh sé fós sealbhaithe aige, áfach. Is é sin le rá, ní raibh a chuid féin déanta aige de. Is cosúil go raibh sé á thástáil i gcomhthéacsanna éagsúla chun go soiléireofaí dó teorainní a úsáide.

AN SLIOCHT BÉARLA

Féachfam ar na struchtúir a tharla sa sliocht Béarla.

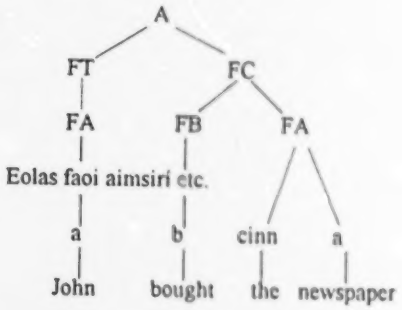
Ní mar a chéile a dhéanfaí roinnt iomasach ar abairt i mBéarla agus a dhéanfaí ar abairt i nGaeilge. Ní fhágann sin nach de réir na bprionsabal céanna a dhéanfaí scagadh orthu.

Sampla: *Abairt ráiteasach dhearfach*
John bought the newspaper.

Comhdhéantasaigh

1. *John*
2. *bought the newspaper*

Bheadh an bhinnléaráid mar seo:



CEISTEANNA

Níor tharla ach na ceisteanna seo a leanas sa sliocht:

Mustn't we?
Will you give me that shovel?
Will you?
Would you like to come with us?
Wouldn't you?
How are you getting on?
Isn't that it?
Is he fighting?
Is he?
***You know what?*
Did he?
Have you something to put in?
There? Over there?

Plé

••Nílim in aon chor cinnte gur chóir é seo a chur leis na ceisteanna. *"Do you know what?"* atá i gceist gan aon amhras, ach, rá folamh é sa chás seo. Cloistear coitianta go leor sa chiall seo é.

Tharla *"There?"* *"Over there?"* i ndiaidh a chéile agus an fheidhm chéanna leo araon.

ABAIRTÍ RÁITEASACHA DEARFACHA

D'úsáid sé dhá abairt is nócha den rangú seo.

Abairtí cónasctha
D'úsáid sé naoi gcinn de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí neadaithe
D'úsáid sé naoi gcinn de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí claochlaithe
D'úsáid sé sé cinn de na habairtí seo.

Abairtí tógálacha
D'úsáid sé deich gcinn de na habairtí seo.

Brathaithe
D'úsáid sé ceann is nócha de na ráite seo.

Nithe *"fochaighdeánacha"* a tharla sa sliocht Béarla

Focail
1. D'úsáid sé an focal Gaeilge *"scrios"* sa rá
If he said a dirty word in that taperecorder I'd *scrios* it out of it.
Tidn't = It isn't. Tá seo coitianta sa chanúint a bhí fairis.
D'úsáid sé *"anyplace"* áit a bheadh súil le *"anywhere"*.

"Phone" a bhí aige ar *"microphone"*. Cuimhnítear gur guthán a bhí aige ar an earra céanna sin sa sliocht Gaeilge.
"Pinnar" a bhí aige ar *"Pillar"*.
Bhí an rá *"I could bang nails"* aige. Tairní a thiomáint a bhí i gceist aige. Is cosúil nach raibh an focal *"drive"* aige. Bheadh san amhlaidh toisc gur ag daoine fásta is dóichí a chloisfeadh sé an téarma agus nár mhór an taithí a bheadh aige ar dhaoine fásta sa ról sin.

Struchtúir

1. *I'm only going.*
   Ní raibh ag dul ach é féin amháin.
2. *You can't be doing that.*
   Ní cás gurbh aistriúchán é seo.
3. *You can't hear nothing.*
4. *It's only all for putting things into it.*
   Ag caint faoin taifeadán a bhí sé. Shíl sé gur chun taifeadadh amháin é agus nárbh fhéidir téipeanna a sheinm air.
5. *You can't say that name in English.*
   Theastaigh uaidh a rá nach raibh aon Bhéarla ar an ainm. Ainm a mhúinteora a bhí i gceist agus bhí duine fásta tar éis fiafraí de cén Béarla a bhí ar an ainm.
6. *He'll only throw a stone.*
   Ní dhéanfaidh sé ach cloch a chaitheamh.
7. *Leave off me.*
   Bog díom.
8. *I could jump off without a hand on nothing.*
9. i *Start on top.*
   ii *On the top you start.*
   Níl aon cheist ach gur claochlú treise ar mhúnla na Gaeilge é seo.
10. *The'll be no nails.*
    Ní bheidh aon tairní ann.

Dhein sé roinnt athrá den saghas céanna agus a dhein sé i nGaeilge.
Samplaí

1. *You can't hear it.*
   You can't hear nothing.
   Even if you put it on you can't hear nothing.

2. *I could jump off without a hand on nothing.*
   I could.
   I could jump up on it.
   I could jump off of it and
   I could jump off that wall and
   I could jump off that pinnar and
   I could jump off everything.
   I could jump off a high wall and
   I could jump off that wall over there.

Measaim gur léir nach ag tabhairt eolais atá sé leis na ráite seo. Tá an chuma air gur ag tástáil éifeachtaí teanga atá sé.

RÓLANNA

Aithnítear trí chineál rólanna ag cainteoir, mar atá *rólanna sóisialta, rólanna síceolaíochta* agus *rólanna teanga.* Léiríodh na rólanna seo a leanas ag an leanbh. Glacaim leis an dá shliocht chun na críche seo.

Rólanna sóisialta

1. óg/aosta
2. iarrthóir/tabharthóir
3. tabharthóir/iarrthóir
4. cara/cara
5. leanbh/tuismitheoir

Rólanna síceolaíochta

1. omós
2. meas
3. comhpháirtíocht
4. comhchéim
5. neamhbhá
6. neodracht

Rólanna teanga

1. cainteoir amháin + éisteoir amháin
2. cainteoir/éisteoir + éisteoir/cainteoir
3. cainteoir + x éisteoir
4. cainteoir/éisteoir + x éisteoir/cainteoir

FEIDHMEANNA

Níl fúm cur síos a dhéanamh ar na feidhmeanna teanga is gá a bheith ar chumas an chainteora, ach, b'fhéidir nárbh aon díobháil é gearrliosta a thabhairt de na cinn a tharla sa dá shliocht atá i gceist agam sa pháipéar seo.

Mar seo a bhí:

1. **Tabhairt agus lorg eolais.**
   - i tuairisciú
   - ii iarraidh agus fiafraí

2. **Meon a nochtadh**

i aontú agus easaontú
ii rud a shéanadh
iii diúltú do thairiscint/cuireadh
iv tairiscint ar rud áirithe a dhéanamh
v gur/nach cuimhin cuimhin leis rud áirithe
vi a rá cibé acu is/nach féidir rud áirithe a dhéanamh.
vii fiafraí an/nach féidir rud áirithe a dhéanamh.
viii inniúlacht nó cumas nó a mhalairt a chur in iúl
ix a rá gur/nach gá rud áirithe a dhéanamh.
x cead rud áirithe a dhéanamh a lorg.
xi a rá nach bhfuil rud ceadaithe.

3. **Mothúcháin a nochtadh agus a fháil amach**

i sástacht a chur in iúl.
ii míshástacht a chur in iúl
iii míshásamh a chur in iúl.
iv a rá cé acu rud is fearr leis
v buíochas a chur in iúl

4. **Áiteamh**

i a mholadh go ndéanfaí rud áirithe.
ii iarraidh ar dhuine eile rud áirithe a dhéanamh.
iii rabhadh a thabhairt do dhuine eile faoi rud áirithe a dhéanamh/gan rud áirithe a dhéanamh.
iv ordú/treorú do dhuine rud a dhéanamh

5. **Caidreamh**

i Beannú do dhuine
ii Slán a fhágáil le duine

Ar na haidhmeanna a bhí agam leis an bpáipéar seo bhí, i dtosach báire, daoine a spreagadh chun níos mó staidéir a dhéanamh ar ghnéithe éagsúla an ábhair seo agus ina dhiaidh sin iad a spreagadh chun an gaol atá idir na gnéithe sin a shoiléiriú mar mhaithe le sealbhú na Gaeilge sa chéad áit agus mar mhaithe le sealbhú teangacha eile ina dhiaidh sin. Ba mhaith liom chomh maith go bhfeicfí do lucht taighde nach gá díolaimí móra agus cruasachtaí cruachacha carnacha chun taighde ar fónamh a dhéanamh. Tá súil agam nár theip ar fad orm an méid sin a thabhairt i gcrích.

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